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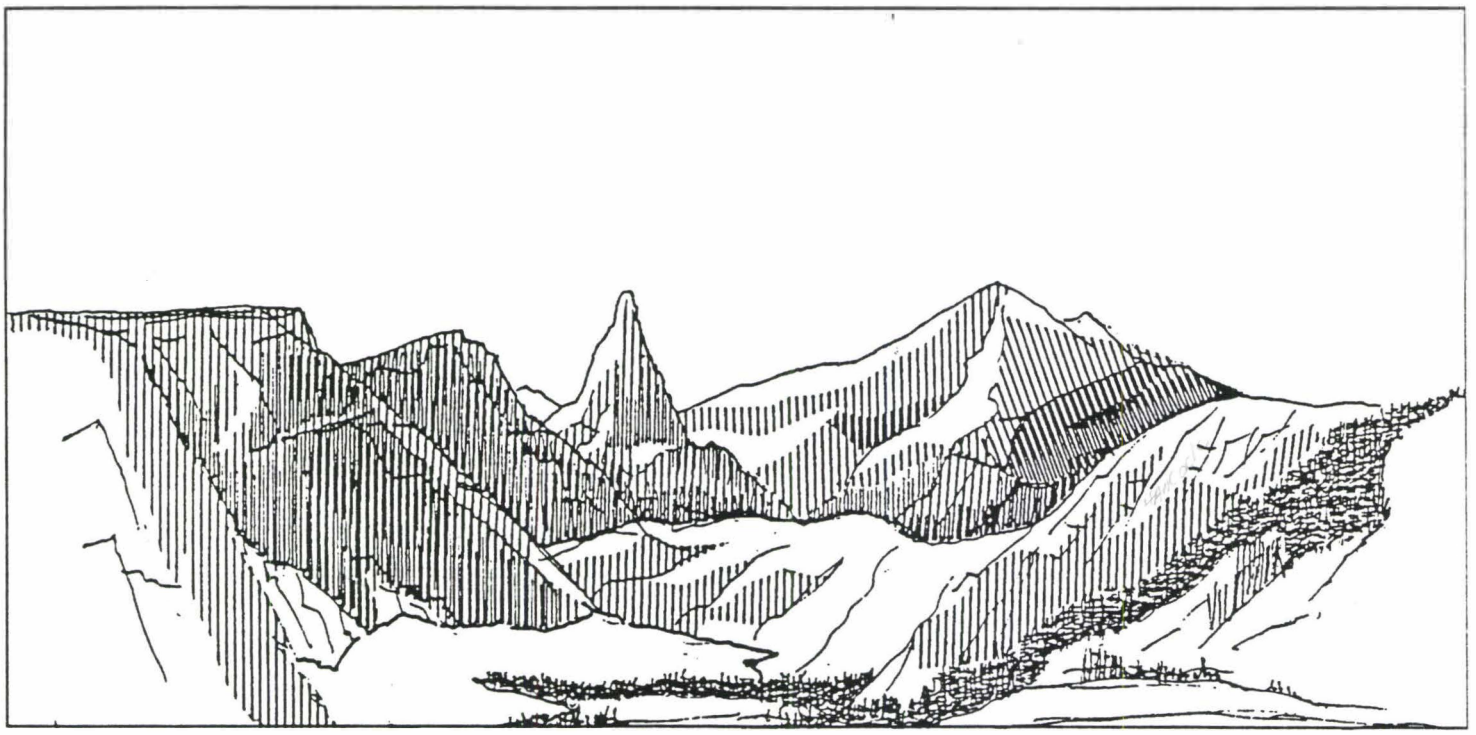
Beartooth Scenic Byway
Recreation Management Proposal



Clemson University
Outdoor Recreation Management Short Course
Class of 1989

BEARTOOTH SCENIC BYWAY

RECREATION MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

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ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Beartooth Scenic Byway Recreation Management Proposal

ABSTRACT: The Beartooth Highway stretches 69 miles from Red Lodge, Montana to the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone National Park. The Forest Service designated it a Scenic Byway in 1989. Visitor services and facilities are inadequate to meet present demand, and recreation use is causing environmental impacts. This proposal recommends recreation management and facility development to promote a high quality recreation experience and to protect sensitive resources.

Public input was used to establish recreation management objectives, and four alternatives were analyzed. The proposed action recommends intensive recreation management; development of information sites, interpretive facilities, and day use areas; and trailhead and campground renovation.

KEYWORDS: Scenic Byway, Interpretive Services

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY: The Beartooth Highway Corridor stretches 69 miles from Red Lodge, Montana to the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone National Park. The Forest Service designated this popular route a Scenic Byway in 1989 to showcase its outstanding scenery. Existing services and facilities are inadequate to meet demand, and recreation use is damaging the fragile alpine environment. The proposed action recommends recreation management and facility development to promote a high quality recreation experience and to protect sensitive resources.

This paper evaluates public input, establishes recreation management objectives, and develops and analyzes recreation management alternatives, including the proposed action. An implementation schedule is recommended to guide the development process. The Forest Service will present these management alternatives to the public and complete an Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice before management decisions are implemented.

To analyze existing management, Forest Plans for the Custer, Gallatin, and Shoshone Forests were reviewed. Recreation managers from the Forests and Yellowstone National Park were interviewed, and two surveys were conducted to determine public issues. This input was used to develop management objectives and the proposed action and alternatives.

Most survey participants valued the semiprimitive setting and unaltered natural ecosystems more than providing additional recreation opportunities, and allowing or encouraging increasing numbers of visitors. Many wanted better information and interpretation of geologic features and natural history.

Four alternatives were analyzed. The No Action alternative would sustain current management. The Forest Plan alternative would implement Forest Plan direction, including development of the 1978 Interpretive Plan. The Proposed Action would support improved recreation management and modest facility development. The Intensive Development alternative proposes substantial facility development and more restrictive management.

The Proposed Action recommends new campground and resort development on private lands near Cooke City and Red Lodge. Development of interpretive exhibits at ten locations is proposed. Development of a visitor center at the Beartooth Ranger District office in Red Lodge and an information site in Cooke City is recommended. Existing campgrounds would be renovated, but kept rustic to maintain the semiprimitive setting. Recreation signs would be rustic, unobtrusive, and consistent. Development of several trailheads and picnic areas is proposed. Dispersed camping along the highway would be discouraged, and popular sites in suitable locations away from the highway would be managed. Improved coordination would take place between the Forests and with Yellowstone Park.

9. **What impressed respondents most about the Corridor?**

Over 65 percent of those surveyed rated the outstanding scenery the most impressive aspect of the Corridor.

10-12, **Should more developed overlooks, picnic areas, or campgrounds be developed?**

The responses were about the same on each of these. Approximately 50 percent wanted no more development. About 25 percent wanted more development and roughly 25 percent were not sure.

13. **Should public resorts or lodges be developed?**

Approximately 80 percent did not want lodges or resorts developed.

14. **If new developments are required, should they be built on private lands near Cooke City and Red Lodge or on national forest lands in the Corridor?**

Approximately 70 percent wanted required development to take place on private lands in the gateway communities.

15. **Should Top of The World Store develop more facilities such as an outdoor picnic area, an information center, larger trailer court, more motel units, or a cafe?**

Respondents were evenly divided between more facilities, no more, and not sure. Only 35 percent of those surveyed had even stopped at the Store. Those that wanted more facilities indicated a public toilet, an outdoor picnic area, and more information services would be helpful. Very few were interested in a cafe, larger motel, or larger trailer court.

16. **Was information adequate and easy to find?**

Approximately 60 percent of respondents believed information was adequate. First-time visitors seemed to have the most difficulty finding information.

17. **Should the Forest Service provide educational exhibits at overlooks?**

Approximately 70 percent wanted educational exhibits.

18. **Should the Forest Service develop a visitor center in the Corridor?**

Respondents were evenly divided between `yes' and `no', but about 20 percent were not sure. Many did not want more development in the Corridor, but were in favor of a center at a gateway community or at Top of The World Store.

19. **Which areas need the most improvement?**

Information/interpretation was thought by respondents to be most in need of improvement.

BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY VISITOR SURVEY

1. **Where did visitors enter the Corridor?**

   Approximately 80 percent of those surveyed entered the Corridor from either end of US 212, equally divided between Red Lodge and Yellowstone Park. The other twenty percent came from WY 296.

2. **What were the activities that visitors engaged in?**

   83% visiting overlooks
   54% hiking near highway
   48% visiting Clay Butte Lookout
   44% camping in developed campgrounds
   39% picnicking
   37% fishing
   35% hiking in backcountry
   34% visiting Top of The World Store

3. **What was the primary activity visitors engaged in?**

   Stopping at overlooks and camping in developed campgrounds were most frequently checked primary activities.

4. **How much time did survey respondents spend in the Corridor?**

   Approximately 50 percent spent several days within the Corridor. Twenty-five percent spent the better part of a day - they came to see the Corridor. Fifteen percent were just driving through and 10 percent stayed for one night.

5. **Where were the respondents from?**

   Ten percent were local, from Red Lodge, Cooke City, Cody, or Powell. Twenty percent were from the region, within 300 miles, and seventy percent were from distant areas over a days drive away.

6. **In what sort of party were the respondents?**

   Almost 80 percent of those surveyed were in a family or couple. Approximately 364 people were involved in the survey.

7. **What were the most popular primary destinations?**

   Most popular primary destinations were the Beartooth Plateau (43 percent) and Yellowstone Park (33 percent).

8. **How did the availability and quality of restrooms rate?**

   Approximately 58 percent of the respondents rated the availability and quality of restrooms above average to very good. Approximately 28 percent rated them below average or very poor, and about 14 percent rated them average.

Require permits for dispersed camping
Don't allow firearms on OHVs, ATVs, or snowmobiles
Hate to see "the most beautiful drive in the world" developed
Should have high quality, not necessarily ultra-modern, interpretive and educational facilities
Need bridge across Clarks Fork and passenger car access to Kersey Lake
Develop a unified plan among the 3 Forests involved
Keep the corridor pristine, and free of noxious weeds
Don't advertise the corridor. This is counterproductive.
Increased use will destroy special Corridor values
Need trailer dump between 296 junction and Island Lake
The area is special because it has not been developed
Primitive character and natural wildness should be criteria to guide development.
The area can provide a quality experience to a finite number.
Increased visitation as a management goal, or by-product of scenic classification, is an ecosystem negative.
Corridor is rare and precious; worth whatever it takes to maintain it.
Forest Service should derive income from tourist accommodations rather than private enterprise capitalizing on public land.
Opposed to contracted services and "progress" via paved roads, flush toilets and motels.
Forest Service does an outstanding job and it should remain under their control.
Go slow! Consider carefully any so-called improvements
Both repeat and one time users are taken with the scenic views, pristine condition and opportunities for solitude.
Need snowmobile trail completed to Cooke City.
Leave some of the burn as is for educational purposes.
Management should cater to the fastest growing groupsof users: retirees in spring/fall and the summer urban motorist
People come to see alpine and subalpine, not forested valleys leading to area.
Remove ski area from East Summit.
Forest Service should protect outfitting industry; may need permits to regulate public use.
Clean up down timber within 50 yards of highway.
Values that make the Corridor special may destroy it, loving area to death"
New World Mine will increase human presence and the socioeconomic issues will impact the environment.
Managing agencies must have funds and manpower to maintain and preserve corridor
Need interagency approach to management
Remember, the area cannot be everything to everybody. You cannot keep the corridor wild, scenic and primitive while also providing campgrounds for everyone and roads for OHVs.

Build "low impact" campground
It's off the highway and already heavily used
Hide tourists in the trees

Some of those opposed to the idea of building a new campground at Lily Lake expressed ideas about the facilities that should be provided:

Keep primitive with Adirondack-like shelters
Picnic area only
Picnic tables, toilets, boat ramp
Harden sites but don't build a campground
Fire rings
Traffic control barriers
Don't build here, people want to be in subalpine
Need an area where one can "rough it"
Garbage collection
Picnic area with toilets
Toilets and water
Keep it as it is

23. **Would you like to see the Beartooth Highway maintained before and beyond the present season of Memorial Day to October 15th?**

The majority feel that the length of the present season is adequate.

Not enough travel to justify longer season
Existing dates make practical sense
Consider cost/benefit ratio
Too expensive to keep open longer
Open road after plowing done; don't wait for specific date
Don't put up closed signs until really closed
If weather allows, open earlier and close later
Keep open through hunting season
May 1 to November 1

24. **Are current destination signs in the Corridor adequate?**

The general feeling is that there are enough destination signs. Ideas were expressed on how to improve the signing:

Mileposts
Need mileage signs for Red Lodge, Cooke City, and Yellowstone Park
Should use international symbols
Sign creek names on crossings

25. **Further comments and suggestions for management of the Beartooth Corridor:**

Keep this very spectacular area as is, but still accommodate increased use.

Don't develop and don't restrict
Develop the sites receiving abuse

Should toilets be built at heavily used sites?

Most feel there is a need for toilets at the heavily used sites. Even some of those who are not in favor of developing the sites feel that toilets are a necessity in heavily used areas if camping is going to be allowed.

Add toilets in heavy use areas
Not in favor of toilets all over the place
Need toilets at high use sites
Do on site by site basis
Toilets would detract from primitive character
Portable toilets
Health reasons mandate toilets in heavy use areas
Use minimum impact toilets, Wallowa type
Could Forest Service manage added work load?

21. **Do you think existing campgrounds should be enlarged and/or new ones built to accommodate peak season use?**

Those surveyed express a concern that definite need be proven before either enlarging or constructing new campgrounds.

Don't build your church for the Christmas season
Not just for peak season days
You will never be able to accommodate everyone. That is not your mission
Direct crowds to less heavily used sites such as Fox Creek and Chief Joseph CG
Hosts could use radios to locate vacant sites and direct campers to them
No new development until existing ones are used efficiently
Provide information on campground availability

More favor enlarging established campgrounds than building new ones.

Enlarge Island Lake and Beartooth Campground
Enlarge in lower elevations only
Build new ones outside the corridor
Build at Fantan, Muddy Creek
Prefer new small campgrounds away from highway
Build new campgrounds only as a last resort

22. **Do you agree with the Shoshone Forest Plan's directive to build a campground at Lily Lake.**

About two-thirds of those surveyed agree with developing a campground at Lily Lake.

Good site: useable for longer season, would take pressure off more fragile areas
Would reduce current adverse impacts
Would be a "sacrifice" area to take pressure off fishing in higher lakes

Relocate Russell Creek Trail
Move Lady of the Lake Trailhead to Colter CG

Most agreed that the trails would show increased use if they were better marked.

Is more use desirable?
Visitors wary of unmarked trails
Inexperienced need information about trail length and difficulty
If visitors want to hike they will find the trails
Need good general map not signs
Better markings might distribute use
Trails don't need increased use

18. Would you like to see additional routes developed for Off-highway Vehicles (OHV)?

This survey shows virtually no support for the development of more OHV trails.

Already enough places to ride
Additions would compound resource damage
Current use has to be better managed; need more law enforcement
Need better map---trails are there
Detrimental to wildlife
Remove Morrison Jeep Road, Lake Creek Road, Sawtooth Lake Road

19. Would you like new trailheads for horses and/or OHVs?

This survey shows little support for new trailheads for horse use or OHVs. Those in favor are concerned about adequate parking space. Affirmative responses specify facilities for horses not OHVs.

For horses: Kersey Lake, Ivy Lake, Clay Butte or Pilot-Index Overlook
Need more parking at Island Lake, Morrison Road, Beartooth Lake, Hauser Lake

20. Should there be regulations to limit dispersed camping within view of the highway?

Over 70% agree to restricting dispersed camping so that it is not visible from the highway. A few feel no need to make changes in the present pattern of dispersed camping, but some comments were directed at the elimination of all dispersed camping, visible or not.

Should popular dispersed sites be developed to reduce resource damage?

Respondents are in favor of limiting resource damage, but there is no consensus on how to achieve that goal. Some want the sites developed to varying degrees, and others want unrestricted use stopped if resource damage is occurring.

Harden the sites
Eliminate dispersed camping
Eliminate or develop to minimize impacts
Improve some of the access "roads"
Restrict to designated campgrounds

Forest Service concept of Multiple Use and recreation management within Corridor
History; including Chief Joseph, miners, herders, rangers, US 212, 1988 fires
Peat Bog
Role of fire in the forest ecosystem
Wilderness
Greater Yellowstone Area concept

15. **What cultural or historic resources along the highway should be protected or interpreted?**

Clay Butte Lookout
Presence of Crow Indians and flight of Nez Perce
Mining history of Cooke City area and the old mining structures
Old pack trail from Red Lodge
Old highway construction camp and route
Camp Sawtooth; stockade at Stockade Lake
Jack Crandall monument
Hunter Peak Lookout

16. **Would you like Clay Butte Lookout upgraded to a visitor center with staff?**

Over three-quarters of those surveyed are in favor of a staffed information center at Clay Butte. It is viewed as a choice spot for the dissemination of information and education about the area. The most mentioned negative aspect is the poor access road.

Put interpretation here, not on the highway
Best opportunity for interpretation and education
Upgrade access road
Most of the traveling public afraid to use road
Road could not accommodate RVs
Very important conduit to establish understanding between public and FS managers
Cost of visitor center not warranted
Don't development very much. Keep it low key.

17. **Would you like to see additional trails or trailheads developed?**

Almost three-quarters of the respondents do not wish to see more trails or trailheads developed, but would rather see the existing trail system repaired and properly maintained.

Clear trail to Hunter Peak
Upgrade trails at Beartooth Lake, Island Lake, and Crazy Creek
Improve some existing trailheads
Do trail work on existing trails

Those wishing to see new trail development offered specific locations and ideas:

Bugle Lake area, Table Mountain area to connect Morrison and Clarks Fork Trail
One day loop trails
More horse facilities

No mineral activities in alpine areas
Even if management activities are out of sight they must meet quality standards since "out of sight is not out of mind"
Need resource management jobs
Management activities for benefit of forest, not for commercial gain
Selective cutting except in burn areas
Public education on need for managing resources
Must compromise on regulations about visual impacts as a large percentage of the Clarks Fork District is visible from the corridor.

13. **Do visitors have adequate access to information about the corridor and the recreation opportunities available?**

Most feel that there is a lack of easily attainable information about the area, though a significant number (20%) did not share that opinion.

Need a good map of the area
Outlets for literature at Forest Service offices, Ranger Stations, overlooks, campgrounds, Top of the World Store, and commercial establishments in gateway communities
Graphic displays at campgrounds and overlooks
No need to advertise the area - the corridor will publicize itself
An appeal in the "undiscovered" feeling
Disseminate information through better informed HOSTs, seasonal employees and a uniformed VIS person cruising the corridor in a Forest Service vehicle
Publicize in outdoor magazines and visual media
Not the role of Government to publicize a public area
Develop a recreation opportunity brochure that includes a map of the area's trails and campground locations, details about the trails: difficulty, distance, time, etc.
Manned information centers
Information boards at points of entrance
Develop information center at Top of the World Store

14. **Are interpretive displays needed along the highway?**

Almost 90% feel there is a need for interpretive displays along the highway but most qualify their answer. The concerns center on too many signs and site degradation.

Clutters the view
Fear sign pollution and too much interpretation
Scenery is enough
A luxury not a necessity
One or two displays at existing facilities

The suggested topics for interpretation were many:

Geology - features such as glaciation, Beartooth Butte, cirques, Pilot Peak, the Reef
Ecosystems such as alpine, forest, etc.
Scenic values
Fragility of the "tundra"
Flora and fauna - wildflowers, pika, mountain goats, grizzly bears
Lakes - fisheries

Park Service could maintain highway and provide law enforcement on the highway.
Public needs the diversity of two agencies.
Travelers enjoy the unstructured experience
Yes, because the Park Service does not practice multiple use
Preserve as a National Park. The Beartooth Plateau is too special and sensitive to be scarred and defaced by the increasing number of visitors.
FS should emphasize recreation management
Management objectives and plans are more important than managing agency
The Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee may resolve this matter.
Need coordination between Park Service and FS
Need better law enforcement
One agency should be accountable for management
Park Service would make interpretation a priority
Park Service would do better job of maintenance

11. **How do you feel about multiple use management within the corridor?**

Everyone expresses concern for the affects of multiple use management on the key values (scenic vistas, wildness, pristine character, wildlife, etc.) of the corridor. Only the degree of concern varies. The spectrum of concern is spread from those who feel multiple use is reasonable, as long as it doesn't detract or interfere with the special attributes of the corridor, to those who feel it is totally incompatible with the values and should be severely limited or totally eliminated.

Don't mix commercial hauling with recreation traffic.
No multiple use within sight of highway
No multiple use "on top." Timbering and grazing is reasonable at lower elevations
Limit timbering so it doesn't affect visuals.
Eliminate hunting and restrict fishing
Eliminate grazing, mining and logging
Keep cattle off the highway; they're a real safety hazard! Herd them like sheep.
Visitors are going to or coming from Yellowstone Park and it is natural for them to compare the two areas. Don't let careless resource management make this an unfavorable comparison.
High wilderness values and limited resource use
Close one mile corridor to logging and mining.
Balance between timber, recreation and grazing; limit mineral exploration
Need special multiple use restrictions

12. **To what degree should resource management activities alter the landscape and affect the scenic vistas from the Beartooth Highway?**

Most of the respondents are concerned about the visual impacts of resource management in the corridor. Sixty percent prefer that any management activities be unnoticeable from the highway. One fourth would not object to those activities that could be accomplished with minimal visual effectsr could be disguised as naturally occurring conditions. Two respondents had no objection to any visual impacts caused by resource management activities.

8. **Should barrier-free criteria be an important aspect of facility development?**

This received an overwhelming "yes" response, but the affirmation was not always unconditional.

Some facilities, not all
Availability should be clearly indicated
Must have barrier-free food and other services
Top of the World Store should be barrier-free
Barrier-free, but primitive character
Don't spend a fortune on existing facilities
Low priority except at day use areas and overlooks
Barrier-free fishing at Island and Beartooth Lakes
Redo existing facilities; don't build new ones
Along highway only

9. **Should all developed overlooks have toilets? Should the Forest Service provide toilets at West Summit and Rock Creek Overlook?**

There is virtually no support for the development of toilet facilities at every overlook. The answers concerning toilet facilities at West Summit and Rock Creek Vista are more complex:

Need one toilet between Red Lodge and Island Lake
Need adequate signing to direct travelers
Don't need more toilets, need better signing
Need "driving time" to next facility on signs
Road signs indicating toilets must be clear.
Perhaps a toilet at junction with WY 296
Either Rock Creek or West Summit
Both Rock Creek and West Summit
Must have adequate funding for maintenance
Rock Creek needs a toilet
Remove toilet at West Summit - it spoils the view!
Don't rebuild Rock Creek toilet
Need toilet at Pilot-Index Overlook
Toilets in alpine environment are an eyesore
New toilet at Long Lake would handle corridor
Provide toilets at campgrounds only

10. **Should the corridor be turned into a Parkway managed by the National Park Service?**

There is overwhelming support for Forest Service administration rather than Park Service. However, some comments suggest that the future of the corridor may be in more jeopardy under Forest Service multiple use management than the preservation management of the Park Service. Many feel that Park Service recreation management would be too restrictive.

New campgrounds should be of primitive character and out of sight
No more development "on top"
Obtain scenic easements from private landowners to maintain corridor integrity
Upgrade existing facilities before adding more
There is a limit to private land at gateway communities

7. **Should Top of the World Store develop additional facilities such as a public toilet, information center, larger trailer court, more motel units, or a cafe?**

There is no consensus for expansion of facilities at Top of the World Store. There is strong support for having a public toilet and an information center here. However there is also strong sentiment against the broadening of services.

Trailer dump station
Remove trailer court and motel, they are eyesores.
No cafe
Discourage facilities that would encourage additional use of area
Cafe would provide a needed service
Don't develop. Top of the World Store is already an intrusion.
No room to expand without impacting environment
Leave as is
Replace motel and trailer court with cabins to fit character of area
Need public phone
No more trailer spaces or motel units
Keep primitive and in character with area
Develop and expand to accommodate travelers.
Don't modernize
Store is in poor location to build more facilities
Modernize trailer court to accommodate RVs
Terminate special use permit and remove store

Should it rent canoes, mountain bikes, or off-highway vehicles?

Ninety-nine percent do not want off-highway vehicles rented and many feel the same way about mountain bikes.

Area cannot handle additional OHV use
Store could not afford insurance
Too fragile to encourage OHV use
Rentals would compromise resource
Maybe canoe rentals
Highway is unsafe for mountain bikes
Encourage rentals to provide recreation opportunities

Should additional items, such as alcoholic beverages, be sold?

Most oppose the sale of alcohol. The reasons involve safety and litter. Only one respondent feels "they should be able to sell anything they choose as long as it is legal."

Use solar toilets
Deeper wells for safe water
RV pads are needed

5. **Would you like to see more picnic grounds or developed overlooks along the Corridor?**

Response was about evenly divided between yes and no. Most comments were from those answering "yes."

Picnic areas at Sunlight Bridge Overlook, Pilot-Index Overlook, Twin Lakes, Beartooth Pass interpretive site, Beartooth Butte, and Henderson Mountain Picnic areas at Clarks Fork Overlook, dispersed site along Clarks Fork River across from Pilot Creek Trailhead, state line pullout near Colter Pass
Improve existing overlooks with interpretive facilities and rustic tables
Develop facilities away from highway where they cannot be seen.
Too many mosquitoes and too cold for picnics at Island Lake CG, Clay Butte, and Long Lake
Not able to maintain picnic grounds considering future budget crunch
Picnic tables and garbage cans at popular overlooks. Add wind shelters later
Enlarge some of the existing overlooks.
Add small picnic area at Beartooth Overlook
Need more developed overlooks to accommodate visitors and reduce traffic hazards at: Twin Lakes, East Summit, Gardiner Lake, West Summit, Rock Creek Overlook, Beartooth Lake, and Beartooth Falls.
Develop existing facilities to capacity
Develop day-use facility at Kersey Lake

6. **Would you like to see more campgrounds and resorts developed on public and/or private land in the Beartooth Corridor? Should these developments be confined to gateway communities?**

At least 80% of the responses oppose any additional development on public lands within the corridor. Those who would consider building additional campgrounds on public lands prefer that existing campgrounds be enlarged before new ones are built. Most want to see private lands in gateway communities used for any further developments.

Minimize adverse impacts on corridor
Confine new facilities to gateway communities
Don't want private enterprise on public land
Build campgrounds on public land; build resorts on private land
Develop high quality campgrounds on private land in Cooke City and Crandall area
No more campgrounds or resorts on corridor
Develop Red Lodge and Cooke City to minimize impacts on Beartooth Plateau
Visitor numbers will stabilize due to increased fuel costs
RV facilities should be near YNP entrances
Those forced to camp in commercial campgrounds will be deprived of quality experience available within the corridor

Local television
Public hearings
Existing FS public involvement process
Talk to AAA and AARP
Questionnaires such as this
Involve GYC and other special interest groups
Public input is helpful, but FS must stand for certain needs and values
Public does not understand intricate ecological factors that affect management
Consider needs of "common" outdoorsman and do not cater to special interests
Advertise open meetings to formulate master plan
FS should establish information outlets on highway and at Ranger Stations
Advertise 800 number to discuss FS policies
Telephone surveys
Trailhead registration sheets
Public forums in surrounding communities
Questionnaire in campgrounds and at overlooks
Develop management plan using NEPA process
General public incapable of managing the resource
Develop an interagency management plan with extensive public involvement

4. **Should the facilities retain their relatively primitive character or would you like to see them modernized?**

The response was 98% in favor of maintaining the primitive facility character.

Primitive character makes this area unique.
Visitors come to get away from modern lifestyles.
If they don't like it primitive, they use an RV.
No concessions in FS campgrounds
Facilities should remain primitive in character
Supply HOSTs with radios
No entrance stations
Daily appearance of FS personnel in addition to compliance checker
No paved roads; use gravel and magnesium chloride
Facilities should be well-maintained and clean!
Offer modern and primitive facilities to provide a range of recreation opportunities
Install modern facilities, possibly a rest area with flush toilets, where use and maintenance would be optimum.
Very difficult to maintain flush-type toilets
"A place where man can go and be a part of nature, rather than above nature" (Wallace Stegner)
Need more parking at campgrounds, trailheads, and access points to lakes and streams
Pave roads in campgrounds to keep down dust.
Flush toilets have same impact as vault toilets. What is carrying capacity?
More camping in subalpine areas; this is where people like to spend their time.
Put modern facilities at lower elevations
No lodges or villages like in Yellowstone Park
Keep campgrounds and other developments "hidden"

Present level of development or less
Just as it is
A naturally preserved environment
Year-round corridor to Cooke City
Interpreter on duty
VIS well-established
First class primitive campgrounds
Public transportation
Same amount of freedom to enjoy area as now
Improved trailheads
Primitive camping opportunities
Informed and well-mannered visitors
Serenity, beauty, natural environment
Less hazardous road
No additional development
More campgrounds away from highway
More comfort for aging population
More information services
Visual upgrade of Top of the World Store
Morrison, Sawtooth, and Lake Creek roads removed
Red Lodge Race Camp ski area removed
Controlled backpacking
A few educational signs
Open range eliminated
Overlooks with larger parking areas
Highway with wider shoulders
Pristine wilderness
New administrative boundaries - Republic Creek to Gallatin; Rock Creek to Shoshone
Same opportunities as now exist

3. **What do you think is the best way to involve the public in management of the corridor?**

Many mention techniques that are now used by the Forest Service and some new ideas. Some expressed a concern about managers being too easily swayed by public concerns.

Public meetings
Consult special interest groups
Public surveys
Use the news media
Form community partnerships
Use Campground Hosts and other volunteers
Surveys taken "on location"; roadside surveys
Publications
Cannot get good input from ignorant public. Make management alternatives and information available so public can offer useful input. Vested interests are always ready to give input for their personal gain.
Do not let public dictate management. They don't have knowledge or ability to see the future.

Unique expanse of fragile alpine plateau
Delicacy
Wilderness experience from your car
Access to wilderness and Yellowstone National Park
Sense of remoteness
Historic attributes
Feeling of proximity to infinity

2. **What would you expect to experience if you visited the Beartooth Corridor a hundred years from now?**

Most expect to see the impacts of increased human use.

More development: campgrounds, resorts, commercial enterprises
New highway and more turnouts
Asphalt-hardened campsites, trails & parking lots
Increase in wheeled-vehicle scars
Proliferation of signs
Glint of trailer roofs in every view
No fish exceeding 9 inches
Litter from fast food restaurant located at Top of World complex
Four-lane highway
No place to escape families with portable electronic entertainment devices
Natural area little changed
Highly controlled and developed commercial resorts
Air pollution would ruin scenic values
Occupancy by permit only
Designated use areas
Subdivisions on private lands
Interpretation of scenery
Visual quality lost due to poor forest management
Unspoiled wilderness visible from your car
More roads
Too many campgrounds
Unsightly, unplanned buildings
Development in alpine and sub-alpine areas
Deterioration of grizzly bear habitat
Deterioration of visuals from logging and mining
Improved road system and campground facilities
More intensive management
Highway open from May 1 through November 1
Unblemished scenic vistas
Litter and OHV tracks everywhere
Damage to the rugged natural vistas

What would you like to experience if you visited the Beartooth Corridor a hundred years from now?

Most want the area to be virtually unchanged from what it is today. Some wanted even fewer developments.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This section describes the public involvement process and summarizes responses from the Beartooth Highway Corridor Development Survey and the Beartooth Highway Visitor Survey. It lists agency personnel consulted and provides a list of references.

SCOPING

Formal scoping involved two public surveys and public notification in the December, 1989 Clarks Fork District newsletter. Informal scoping has occurred throughout preparation of this paper.

In December, 1989 the Beartooth Highway Corridor Development Survey was sent to 60 individuals and groups known to have an understanding of the Corridor. Those contacted included recreationists, Campground Hosts, business owners, residents, outfitters, and Chambers of Commerce. Special interest groups, past and present employees of the Forest Service and Park Service, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee, and Highway Department personnel were included. Thirty-eight surveys were returned for a response rate of 63 percent.

The Beartooth Highway Visitor Survey was conducted in August, 1990 by distributing 180 surveys with stamped return envelopes to visitors in the Corridor. One hundred and two were returned for a response rate of 57 percent. Survey respondents engaged in a variety of recreational activities, representing a cross-section of users.

BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

1. **What are the most important values of the Beartooth Corridor that managing agencies should preserve?**

   Almost all the responses emphasize the scenic quality and pristine character of the area.

   Scenery, aesthetics
   Pristine character
   Backwoods experience, primitive character
   Undeveloped character
   Dispersed and unconfined recreation
   Alpine ecosystem
   Water quality
   Wildlife, grizzly bear habitat
   Developed recreation opportunities
   Minimum visual impacts from human use
   Preserve the largely wilderness ecosystem
   Hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping
   Flora and fauna intact and undisturbed
   Easily accessible pristine area
   Raw, unspoiled look
   Wild character
   Commodity uses - grazing and timber
   Minimum restrictions on visitors

Figure 4. COST ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION

This table displays a cost analysis of individual development items in the Proposed Action.

Proposed Developments	Construction Cost (M$)	Year
Clay Butte Info Site	20	1991
Top of World Rest Area	25	1991
Rock Creek Vista Point	90	1991
Clarks Fork Picnic Ground	53	1991
Interpretive Exhibits (6)	72	1991
Crazy Creek Falls Wayside	10	1991
Bear's Tooth Parking	4	1991
Campground Kiosks	14	1991
Chief Joseph Picnic Ground	15	1991
Trailhead Information	4	1991
Morrison - Hauser Trailhead	15	1991
Fantan Parking Area	4	1991
Sign Plan Implementation	10	1991
Lily Lake Protection	5	1992
Renovate Campgrounds	160	1992
Enlarge Beartooth CG	60	1992
Reconstruct Beartooth TH	9	1992
Red Lodge Visitor Center	150	1993
Cooke City Info. Site	50	1993
	770	Construction Cost
	154	Planning & Design
	154	Administration
	1078	**Total Cost**

Figure 3. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE

This table displays the total development costs, additional annual management costs, and additional annual revenue by alternative.

Analysis Components	A (M$)	B (M$)	C (M$)	D (M$)
Total Cost	0	1065	1078	2434
Additional Annual Management Costs	12	35	30	45
Additional Annual Revenue	0	12	66	127

Economic Efficiency

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would sustain current expenditures and revenues. Funds would not be spent on new facilities or more employees, but high maintenance needs would require increased spending.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would require an increase in expenditures to construct and maintain new facilities, and staff the information sites and visitor center. Numerous waysides would be costly to maintain. Maintenance needs of existing facilities would require increased spending.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would also require an increase in expenditures to construct and maintain facilities, and staff the information sites and visitor center. Better managed, renovated campgrounds would increase revenue, and there would be potential revenue from interpretive association sales.

Annual maintenance costs would equal the costs associated with Alternative A. The rest area at Top of the World Store would be maintained by the permittee. Maintenance costs associated with West Summit toilet and garbage cans would be eliminated. Maintenance of the Rock Creek Vista Point facility would be an additional burden, but this site is the least expensive alternative for a toilet between Red Lodge and Top of the World Store. Costs of maintaining a new Clarks Fork picnic ground would be minimal, since it lies between campgrounds and the Crandall Work Center. Improved coordination should save maintenance and recreation funds.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would also require an increase in expenditures to construct and maintain facilities and staff the information sites and visitor centers. Additional revenues would be collected from new campgrounds and higher fees charged at existing campgrounds. Top of the World Store would generate higher permit fees.

Increased campground capacity would require another maintenance crew and more housing at the Crandall Work Center. The access road to the Clay Butte Visitor Center should be substantially upgraded, as increased traffic would create hazardous conditions. Maintaining renovated facilities at West Summit would result in daily maintenance trips. Installation of the modern, reflectorized signing would be more expensive than routed signs. Replacement would be required every five years, as this type of sign deteriorates quickly under the adverse climatic conditions of the Plateau. More law enforcement would be necessary to enforce new regulations and monitor heavy recreation use.

able commitment of resources. Disturbed areas could be rehabilitated to a natural, undisturbed condition.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects are environmental impacts which result from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless what agency or person undertakes such actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over time.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would only forestall future development and management actions. There would be no immediate cumulative impacts, but there could be indirect cumulative impacts from future development.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would not preclude future development. Forest Plan direction is not specific regarding recreation management, and managers would continue to consider a variety of development options. The Forest Service Recreation Initiative and resurrected Capital Investment Programs have created an effective development process. Interpretive Plan implementation and construction of Lily Lake Campground could instigate future development, causing indirect cumulative effects.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would reduce the potential for future development which could lead to cumulative effects. When facilities reach capacity, it may be difficult for managers to resist development. This alternative and Semiprimitive Motorized ROS classification would limit future development to private lands near gateway communities.

Alternative D

The potential for cumulative effects would be greatest with the Intensive Development alternative. The Roaded Natural ROS classification would favor future development. More development could cause cumulative impacts to wildlife, soils and vegetation, visuals, cultural resources, and recreation.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Management strategies must be cost-effective, but still provide superior service. High caliber facilities must be economical to construct and maintain. This section describes the economic efficiency of each alternative and provides a cost comparison. Figure 3 displays total development costs, additional annual management costs, and additional annual revenue. Figure 4 displays a cost analysis of the Proposed Action.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would have a positive effect on economic stability, and effects would be similar to Alternative B. However, management would restrict Corridor promotion to special populations and non-traditional user groups. Although this could delay the increase in use, some Cooke City business owners suggest that they already have more summer use than they can handle (Schaller, 1990). Tangible economic development would result from higher visitation during the shoulder seasons, May and September. Demographics suggest that use during these seasons will increase with the burgeoning ranks of well-to-do retirees. Planned recreation development and coordinated management would ensure lasting economic stability for gateway communities.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would have a positive effect on economic stability. Promotional campaigns using videos and brochures would entice travelers. Additional campgrounds would increase overnight stays and Top of the World Store would become a destination resort.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Other jurisdictions include the Montana and Wyoming Highway Departments. The Park Service has no jurisdiction, but it is responsible for highway maintenance from Yellowstone Park to the state line above Red Lodge.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would not directly affect other jurisdictions.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would directly impact the Montana Highway Department because the wayside exhibits near Cooke City lie within their right-of-way. Rock Creek Vista Point is on National Forest System lands, but the parking area belongs to the State of Montana. All facilities would be maintained by the Forest Service. The Cooke City visitor information site would be on private property within the unincorporated town. One sign would be installed within the Wyoming Highway Department right-of-way at the junction of WY 296 and the Beartooth Highway.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would cause impacts similar to Alternative B. The Corridor Host at the Northeast Entrance would need some space in the entrance station.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would cause effects similar to Alternative C. Increased recreation use could interfere with Park Service maintenance activities.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

An irreversible commitment of resources occurs when nonrenewable resources such as mineral materials are removed. Irretrievable commitment occurs when the use of renewable resources is delayed because of allocation decisions. None of the alternatives would cause irreversible or irretriev-

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

Wetlands and floodplains would not be affected by the proposed action or alternatives.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resource inventories are required before ground- disturbing activities begin. The potential for disturbance is greatest where facility development is proposed, and cultural resources can be affected by recreation use.

Alternative A

Because no developments are proposed, the No Action alternative would not have a direct impact on cultural resources. Indirect impacts could result from uncontrolled recreation use at dispersed campsites. Cultural resource surveys would not be done, so the potential of locating new sites would be foregone.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would require cultural resource clearance for all wayside developments, interpretive trails, and Lily Lake campground construction. Several wayside exhibits would interpret historic and cultural events.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would require similar inventories as in Alternative B, and interpretive exhibits would discuss cultural history. Management of dispersed recreation could reduce encroachment on unknown cultural sites.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would require cultural resource inventories on a larger scale than Alternatives B and C, and there would be more potential of finding new sites. Elimination of dispersed camping would prevent encroachment on unknown sites.

SOCIOECONOMIC

Potential economic impacts to gateway communities are discussed in this section.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would not directly affect economic opportunities. Inferior facilities and inadequate management would be detrimental to customer satisfaction, which could cause indirect economic impacts.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would have a positive effect on economic stability. Lily Lake Campground would accommodate more recreation use, and the Red Lodge visitor center would attract visitors. Studies in Yellowstone Park indicate that 72 percent of Park visitors visit museums or visitor centers (Machlis, 1988).

existing campground. Maintaining the present number of campgrounds would reduce the risk of adverse impacts to grizzly bears relative to Alternative B. Visitor information services and intensive management of dispersed recreation would reduce indirect impacts.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would cause more adverse impacts to wildlife than the other alternatives due to new campground development and Corridor promotion. New campgrounds would displace wildlife from traditional range and more people would compete for wildlife viewing opportunities. Campground development would be more extensive than in Alternative B and the impacts would be amplified. Elimination of dispersed camping would reduce indirect effects.

SOILS AND VEGETATION

Direct and indirect effects on soils and vegetation are greatest where facility development is proposed. Construction has a direct affect and the impacts of recreation use are indirect. Developments attract visitors onto the fragile alpine community.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would not directly affect soils and vegetation. Indirect effects would occur as the result of OHV use and uncontrolled dispersed recreation use. Lack of adequate trailhead facilities on the Morrison Road, at Beartooth Lake, and at the Fantan Road would allow damage to the subalpine grassland to continue.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would cause minor site specific impacts to soil and vegetation where interpretive waysides and trails are proposed. Development of the Lily Lake campground would have a short-term effect on soils and vegetation, but proper design and mitigation would prevent significant damage. Indirect effects would occur as in Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would have site specific effects similar to Alternative B, except the number of developments is reduced and there would be only minor disturbance caused by campground enlargement. Visitor information services and intensive management of dispersed recreation would reduce indirect impacts.

Campground renovation would not affect soils and vegetation. Developing the first one third mile of the Morrison road and providing a parking area would keep vehicles off the fragile terrain and discourage indiscriminate off-highway travel.

Alternative D

Implementation of the Intensive Development alternative would cause site specific impacts to new campground and picnic area locations. Proper campground design and mitigation measures would prevent significant damage. Indirect effects would be reduced due to the elimination of dispersed camping.

Minor campground enlargement, coordinated campground management, renovated facilities, and a shortened length of stay would provide more camping opportunities. However, due to limited capacity, there could be a shortage of sites in the popular subalpine zone. A reservation system could become necessary when demand exceeds capacity. Larger RVs would be accommodated, and visitors would be able to camp near Cooke City in a modern Forest Service campground with utilities. Campers forced to use a private campground would not be able to enjoy the semiprimitive setting of a Forest Service facility.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative provides a wide variety of recreation opportunities similar to the Proposed Action. Travelers would benefit from new accommodations and a wider variety of services, including equipment rentals at Top of the World Store. A visitor center at Clay Butte would be a primary attraction for those who could negotiate the road. A variety of picnic grounds would be convenient.

Rainbow Lake campground would provide another opportunity to camp in the subalpine zone, and the Lily Lake campground would add capacity for early season camping. Visitors seeking a developed camping experience would be more likely to find a campsite.

Closing the Corridor to dispersed camping would eliminate a popular recreation activity. Promotional activities would lead to increased use and further strain facility carrying capacity. The opportunity to experience solitude or enjoy a semiprimitive setting would be compromised.

WILDLIFE

The Forest Service must complete a Biological Evaluation of the impact of any project on threatened and endangered species as part of its environmental analysis process. The consequences listed here do not constitute this evaluation of potential impacts to grizzly bears.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would not directly affect wildlife. Indirect effects would occur from developed recreation use, OHV use, and uncontrolled dispersed use.

Alternative B

The interpretive waysides of the Forest Plan alternative would not cause direct impacts, but use of the interpretive trails could cause minor displacement. Indirect effects would be similar to those in Alternative A, but visitor information services would help reduce the impacts.

Lily Lake is already a popular dispersed camping area, but campground development could increase the risk of adverse impacts to grizzly bears. Campgrounds provide a source of attractants for bears, and developing new campgrounds can increase the risk of bear/human confrontations. Sometimes these result in bears being rewarded with food and becoming habituated to humans. Depending on circumstances, habituated bears may have to be removed from the ecosystem causing a negative impact to the bear population.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would have site specific effects similar to Alternative B, except the number of interpretive sites would be significantly reduced, and there would be only minor enlargement of an

Alternative C

The Proposed Alternative would renovate campgrounds and all new developments would be constructed to barrier-free standards. Twelve new campsites would be built at Beartooth Lake campground, but four sites would be removed for trailhead development. Soda Butte Campground would be modernized. The new toilets at Rock Creek Vista Point and the Top of the World Store would receive heavy use. The spacing of these toilets would reduce the need for the West Summit toilet which would be removed. Chief Joseph Campground would receive moderate use as a picnic ground. The proposed Clarks Fork Picnic Area would provide an ideal stopping place halfway between Beartooth Pass and Cooke City. Its location would ensure milder temperatures compared to potential sites higher on the Plateau.

This alternative would increase campground capacity by only eight units. It would partially resolve the lack of capacity by providing campsite information, by managing dispersed sites, by renovating existing units to accommodate larger RVs, and by shortening the length of stay. It would rely on the private sector to provide more campgrounds on private lands rather than cause additional adverse impacts to Forest lands.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would provide high quality, barrier-free facilities in all the campgrounds. Fifty-one new campsites would accommodate more overnight visitors. The needs of those requiring modern facilities would be met. The new picnic grounds and new toilets at West Summit would be convenient. Top of the World Store would become a full-service resort to serve many needs.

Opportunities

Alternative A

Recreation opportunities would remain the same under the No Action alternative. Failure to manage dispersed recreation could result in more restrictions and fewer opportunities in the future.

Alternative B

Effects of the Forest Plan alternative would be similar to those of Alternative A, except many new interpretive opportunities and a new campground would be available. Current users of the undeveloped Lily Lake area might be inclined to find other dispersed sites. The Daisy Pass auto tour would promote off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in the Cooke City mining area.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would sustain a variety of recreation opportunities. Dispersed camping would be readily available away from the highway and at Lily Lake, but campsites near the highway would be reduced.

Interpretive exhibits would be available, and barrier-free recreation opportunities would increase. The Corridor Host position, adequate signing, and coordination between Forests and Yellowstone Park would help visitors enjoy the Corridor. Crazy Creek Falls wayside would provide a safe access to experience the falls, and the Clarks Fork Picnic Area would provide picnicking at a strategic location. Opportunities to use off-highway vehicles or to stay overnight at Top of the World Store would not change.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would have an adverse effect on the semiprimitive setting. Development and promotional activities would encourage recreation use which could lead to new regulations and a higher law enforcement presence. More visitors would disturb wildlife and reduce the opportunity for solitude.

Proposed developments would shift the ROS classification toward the more developed end of the Spectrum, and the opportunity to experience a semiprimitive setting would suffer. The increase in carrying capacity for overnight use would cause more recreation use at lakes and streams. Freedom to camp in dispersed sites would be eliminated.

Interpretation and Information

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would maintain existing interpretation and information facilities.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would provide visitors with several strategically located information sites. Good information would encourage better distribution and foster proper camping and backcountry use techniques. Twenty-six interpretive exhibits would provide visitors numerous opportunities to learn about the environment and forest management.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would develop ten high quality interpretive sites. A few comprehensive sites should provide a better interpretive experience than a multitude of conventional sites (Nesselroad, 1989). There would be information sites at Clay Butte Lookout, at Top of the World Store, and at each end of the Corridor. The Interpretive Association sales outlet would provide educational materials. A brochure would provide recreation information, and adequate signing would help orient visitors. Trailhead bulletin boards would depict trail opportunities, and campground kiosks would provide information.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would provide similar interpretation and information services as Alternative C, but there would be more sites. Clay Butte would be upgraded to a full-service visitor center.

Facilities

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would do nothing to upgrade substandard facilities.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would provide an array of wayside exhibits and would increase campground capacity by 20 units. It would not upgrade substandard facilities.

The Clarks Fork picnic ground and Crazy Creek Falls wayside would impact visual quality to some extent. However, picnic facilities would be situated out of sight, and most of the Crazy Creek development would be away from the highway.

More intensive management of dispersed recreation would reduce indirect impacts. Dispersed campsites in the foreground would be managed and controlled use would improve visual quality. Development of the Morrison Trailhead would keep parked vehicles out of view. Removal of the toilet and garbage cans at West Summit would improve visual quality at this scenic overlook. Scenic easements would preserve visual quality on private lands indefinitely.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development strategy would have effects similar to Alternative C, except the number of developments would be increased. There would be approximately 36 new approach signs. A new campground at Rainbow Lake would be visible from the highway. Developing more facilities at West Summit would impact the visual quality at this scenic viewpoint. Elimination of dispersed camping would reduce indirect impacts, and scars caused by vehicles going to dispersed sites would be precluded.

RECREATION

Impacts to recreation are the result of actions that affect setting, opportunities, interpretation and information, facilities, distribution and use, and recreation management.

Setting

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would preserve the semiprimitive setting for a limited time, but the ROS classification would remain Roaded Natural. The unrestrained aspect of this alternative would allow future developments and the semiprimitive setting could be lost (Stankey, 1989). Lack of visitor information, coordinated management, and law enforcement would further erode the semiprimitive setting. This alternative would allow freedom to pursue recreation activities in an unregulated environment.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would allow indirect effects similar to Alternative A, and development of numerous waysides and a new campground would further degrade the semiprimitive setting.

Alternative C

By using ROS as a management tool, the Proposed Action would establish control over unforeseen development proposals that could affect the semiprimitive setting. Removal of West Summit facilities and strategic placement of interpretive exhibits would improve the semiprimitive setting. Visitors would still enjoy the opportunity to have a "wilderness experience from your car" (Napoli, 1990). Although there is already a toilet and paved parking area, Clarks Fork picnic area development would impact the semiprimitive setting. Management of dispersed recreation would have a positive effect on the setting, but there would be less freedom to camp anywhere.

Development of the New World Mine would have a profound effect on the economies of Silver Gate and Cooke City. There may be strong development pressure on private lands near Cooke City.

OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Highway jurisdiction lies entirely with the Forest Service in Wyoming, but with the Montana Highway Department in Montana. The Park Service has no jurisdiction, but is responsible for maintenance of the road surface from the Northeast Entrance to the state line above Red Lodge. Cooperative agreements designate maintenance, signing, and right-of-way management responsibilities. The Wyoming Highway Department has jurisdiction on Wyoming Highway 296 which intersects the Beartooth Highway.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section discloses probable direct and indirect consequences of each alternative on selected environmental components.

VISUALS

The potential for direct effects to visual quality is greatest where facility development is proposed. Visual quality is indirectly affected by recreation activities and impacts to vegetation, soils, and wildlife.

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would cause indirect effects to visual quality. Campers would continue to use dispersed sites adjacent to the highway, and vehicles parked at trailheads would continue to impact visual quality. The facilities at West Summit Overlook, administrative signs at the state line, and the motel and trailers at the Top of the World Store would continue to have a negative impact. The potential for unsightly development of private lands would remain.

Alternative B

The Forest Plan alternative would cause similar indirect effects as Alternative A, but numerous interpretive waysides adjacent to the highway would directly impact visual quality. Forty-eight new approach signs and vehicles parked at waysides would be easily seen. Careful trail design would mitigate visual impacts of interpretive trails. The potential for unsightly development of private lands would remain.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would minimize visual impacts of interpretive sites by strategic placement of exhibits away from the highway. Information facilities would be located only at sites already developed, such as campgrounds, gateway communities, and Top of the World Store. There would be 18 new approach signs for trailheads and overlooks.

is required. The length of stay in developed campgrounds and at dispersed campsites is fourteen days.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife such as elk, black bears, grizzlies, and peregrine falcons live in the Corridor, but are not often seen from the highway. Moose, mule deer, marmots, pikas, and raptors are often spotted, and mountain goats are occasionally observed. Wildlife viewing is a popular activity. The grizzly bear and peregrine falcon are listed as threatened and endangered species, respectively, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Efforts in the Greater Yellowstone Area to aid their recovery have raised public awareness and population trends are up.

SOILS AND VEGETATION

Vegetation is composed of lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, and Englemann spruce forests, sagebrush uplands, and alpine plant communities. Most significant to this proposal are the alpine areas above 9,500 feet where soils are shallow and very sensitive to disturbance. Below this zone, soils are moderately deep and vegetation cover is high. Recovery from resource disturbing activities is rapid.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

There are many wetlands and floodplains within the Corridor, especially along Rock Creek, the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River, and Soda Butte Creek. On the Plateau, there are numerous streams, lakes, potholes, marshes, and wet areas.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Known cultural resource structures include historic buildings at the RDS, L Bar T, and B4 ranches; historic mines in Rock Creek Canyon and the Cooke City area; and a few isolated homestead cabins. Remnants of the Sheridan trail, the first route pioneered across the Plateau by General Philip H. Sheridan in 1882, can still be seen from the switchbacks. A group of Nez Perce led by Chief Joseph, fled the U.S. Army along the Bannock Trail near Cooke City during their famous flight toward Canada. Evidence of early Native American use is scattered throughout the Beartooths, but no known sites are documented within the Corridor.

SOCIOECONOMIC

The Beartooth Corridor is an hour drive from Billings, Montana, a metropolitan area of 130,000 people. Red Lodge has approximately 2,000 people, and the Cooke City - Silver Gate area has about 150 year-round residents.

Yellowstone Park draws over two million visitors each year from across the United States and around the world (Yellowstone National Park, 1989). Many visitors access the Park from the Beartooth Highway, and local residents visit the Corridor to escape the heat of the valleys and to enjoy the spectacular scenery and recreation opportunities. Approximately 250,000 people travel the Beartooth Highway each summer (Schaller, 1989). The recreation industry is the primary source of income in Red Lodge, Cooke City, and Silver Gate, and many overnight accommodations are available.

The Red Lodge International Summer Race Camp and the Top of the World Store are the only commercial developments within the Corridor under Forest Service permit. A few outfitters use trailheads to operate backcountry trips.

are full most of the time, but others usually have units available. Many campsites are not designed to accommodate modern RVs.

Toilets at popular overlooks are antiquated and inaccessible. Rock Creek Vista Point is an important interpretive site, but it does not have a toilet. The toilet at West Summit is the only one adjacent to the highway between Red Lodge and Top of the World Store. It receives very heavy use, but its isolation makes maintenance difficult. For many visitors, this toilet is the first example of a Forest Service facility. Campgrounds have toilets, but only a few near Rock Creek are barrier-free. The Top of the World Store does not have an acceptable public toilet due to an inadequate septic system. There are substandard toilets at the Pilot-Index and Clarks Fork Overlooks.

Garbage cans are provided and maintained by the Forest Service at all campgrounds and several overlooks. They tend to collect large volumes of trash and timely dumping is difficult.

Distribution and Use

Trends, demographic patterns, recent events, and development of Greater Yellowstone Area transportation systems affect use. There is a trend toward more weekend vacations and a perception that quality of life is becoming an important value to the younger generation (McLellan, 1989). These trends indicate increased use from the Billings metropolitan area, but use by visitors from further away may decrease. Although backcountry use is declining, the baby boom generation is still coming to visit the Beartooths, now with their families instead of their backpacks. Changing demographic patterns should bring more retired persons to the Corridor and shoulder-season use may increase. Future gasoline shortages or high energy prices may limit recreation use or increase use of mass transit.

Use at the Northeast Entrance was up 26 percent from several previous years in 1989 (National Park Service, 1989). This increase can be partially attributed to curiosity about the fires of 1988, but some of the use may be due to the increasing popularity of the Corridor. Designation as a Scenic Byway and the completion of paving on Wyoming Highway 296 should bring even more visitors.

One of the more significant factors that may affect recreation use is the pending development of the New World Mining District near Cooke City. This venture could employ over two hundred miners, and the potential impact of these employees, their families, and service industry personnel is formidable.

Recreation use is poorly distributed. Light use occurs south of the highway, while the High Lakes Wilderness Study area and Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness are popular with fishers, hikers and backpackers. Some campgrounds are always full while others have room.

Management

Forest Service recreation management suffers from poor communication and a lack of coordination between recreation personnel on adjacent Forests and with the Park Service. Recreation funding is inadequate to provide high quality facility maintenance or routine Forest Service patrols of heavily used recreation areas. Crews from each District maintain facilities on their respective units. Some campgrounds have full-time Campground Hosts, while others have none. Hosts do not have adequate communication with each other or with Forest Service personnel.

Forest regulations affect the recreation experience. Off-road travel is regulated and motorized vehicles are restricted to designated roads and trails. Visitors are allowed to drive up to 300 feet off a designated route to find a campsite or collect firewood. Mountain bikes are allowed off roads and trails. Portions of the Beartooth Highway are closed seasonally, and seasonal road closures affect the Morrison jeep road and the Fantan road. In occupied grizzly bear habitat, proper food storage

destination and stay at least several days, and many visitors from the local area spend a day sightseeing (Beartooth Highway Visitor Survey, 1990).

An important aspect of Corridor recreation is the opportunity to enjoy activities in a semiprimitive setting. Except for a few developments, there is little evidence of human activity. As one survey respondent put it, "You have the opportunity for a wilderness experience from your car!" (Napoli, 1990).

There are twelve Forest Service campgrounds with 220 units, one picnic area, and twelve developed overlooks in the Corridor. Only three overlooks have toilets, but several provide garbage cans. The most popular campgrounds are in the Rock Creek drainage, on top of the Plateau, and near Cooke City. Summer use in popular sites averages over 86 percent of capacity. The small Chief Joseph Campground has been closed for years, but was opened in 1990 to relieve pressure on Colter Campground which has been severely damaged by fire.

Unable to find a campsite or unwilling to use a developed campground, many campers venture along primitive roads to locate dispersed sites. Some of these popular sites are ideally located, but heavy use is causing sanitation problems. Some sites are within view of the highway, and others are experiencing resource damage as the users spread out to find solitude.

Trails into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and High Lakes Wilderness Study Area receive heavy use, but few hikers are aware of the Beartooth Loop National Recreation Trail. The rugged Morrison jeep road is becoming popular with mountain bike enthusiasts.

Facilities for the traveler are lacking. Many want to picnic and the lack of separate picnic grounds forces them into heavily used campgrounds. Approach signs to trailheads and overlooks are inadequate, and travelers are often not aware of scenic viewpoints.

The Top of the World Store provides gasoline, travelers supplies, four motel units, and ten trailer spaces. They are routinely besieged by visitors seeking information and a toilet.

Points of interest include Rock Creek Vista Point, Red Lodge Race Camp, East Summit, West Summit Overlook, Island Lake, Top of The World Store, Beartooth Butte, Beartooth Lake, Beartooth Creek Falls, Clay Butte Lookout, Pilot-Index Overlook, Clarks Fork Overlook, Lake Creek Falls, Onemile Creek Overlook, and Crazy Creek Falls. Crazy Creek and Lake Creek Falls are dangerous rapids easily reached by visitors.

Interpretation and Information

Rock Creek Vista Point, Clay Butte Lookout, the Colter Pass wayside, and the Cooke City historic wayside provide the only interpretive displays. The exhibits are over twenty years old. The Gallatin National Forest presents evening interpretive programs at an amphitheater in Cooke City.

Information is available at the Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce, the Beartooth Ranger District office, Clay Butte Lookout from July 1 through September 7, and at a Forest Service kiosk in Cooke City. Top of the World Store provides information on an informal basis, and Campground Hosts assist campground visitors. The Park Service does not distribute National Forest information.

Facilities

Many campgrounds on the Shoshone and Gallatin Forests are outdated, inaccessible to the physically challenged, and in need of heavy maintenance or reconstruction. The most popular campgrounds

Along the Clarks Fork River, riparian views dominate the background of rugged peaks, and historic buildings, irrigated meadows, and native grass pastures at the RDS, L Bar T, and B4 ranches are in view.

Ascending toward Colter Pass, the view of Pilot Peak is impressive as it looms ever closer. Dense forests soon shelter the road and scenic vistas are limited. Descending into Cooke City and Silver Gate, there are good views of imposing peaks that overshadow the entire Soda Butte drainage. The foreground is dominated by businesses, summer homes, and numerous signs.

RECREATION

The affected recreation environment is defined by setting, opportunities, interpretation and information, facilities, distribution and use, and recreation management.

Setting

The Rock Creek drainage is developed with a variety of summer homes, church camps, and other buildings near the highway. The ROS classification is Roaded Natural. As the visitor ascends the switchbacks and travels across the Plateau, the setting becomes more primitive, uncontrolled, and more like a backcountry experience. Except for the highway, the Red Lodge Race Camp, the Top of the World Store, and several overlooks, the setting could be considered Semiprimitive Motorized from the switchbacks to Pilot-Index Overlook. Nonetheless, the ROS classification is Roaded Natural.

A more developed setting is found past the Pilot-Index Overlook when the highway improves and visitors become aware of distant subdivisions, livestock and timber management operations, and private lands. Should these be subdivided, there would be an adverse impact to the Roaded Natural setting.

From Colter Pass through Cooke City to the Northeast Entrance, the corridor is developed and the ROS classifications are Roaded Natural and Rural. The highway bisects private lands with cabins and trailer spaces for rent. Visitors pass three Forest Service campgrounds and enter the tourist-oriented atmosphere of Cooke City. The Corridor from Cooke City through Silver Gate to the Northeast Entrance is mostly in private ownership. Summer homes dot the hillsides and any undeveloped or primitive character is gone.

Resource management considerations also affect setting. Between Red Lodge and the West Summit of Beartooth Pass, a large percentage of the land east of the highway and within the Rock Creek drainage is leased for oil and gas development. One unsuccessful wildcat well has been drilled in Rock Creek Canyon. Most of the land north of the highway is within the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness or the Beartooth High Lakes Wilderness Study Area. Sheep graze south of the highway from the switchbacks to Chain Lakes, and cattle graze from Clay Butte to Fox Creek Campground. From Top of the World Store to Silver Gate, forest lands are considered suitable for timber harvest. Several small sales have been harvested within the Corridor.

Opportunities

The Corridor provides a variety of recreation opportunities including driving for pleasure, observing wildlife, camping, hiking, fishing, backpacking, horseback riding, bicycling, riding off-highway vehicles (OHVs), studying the environment, big game hunting, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. About half the visitors are going to or coming from Yellowstone Park. Some of these visitors stop for a night, but many drive straight through. Other visitors consider the Beartooth Corridor their primary

ROADS AND TRAILS

The entire Beartooth Highway is paved, but design and surfacing standards vary. Within the first ten miles of Red Lodge, the highway is designed for speeds of 50 miles per hour. At the base of the switchbacks, the highway becomes a very narrow, winding mountain road with rough surfacing. This design reaches across the Plateau to Pilot-Index Overlook. Here the highway returns to a high standard which continues west to the state line. Reverting to a narrow, winding mountain road, it continues through Cooke City to Yellowstone Park. Safety hazards from traffic congestion exist at Rock Creek Vista Point, the East Summit, and Lake Creek Bridge.

Except for the highway and a few primitive roads, the Corridor is not roaded. Several roads in the Rock Creek drainage access trailheads to the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. On the Plateau, a few jeep roads access dispersed recreation areas. The Morrison jeep road descends over 5,000 feet before reaching the mouth of the Clarks Fork Canyon. The three-mile access road to Clay Butte Lookout is narrow and not suitable for vehicles pulling trailers or large RVs. Miles of low standard roads near Cooke City reach historic mining areas and the New World Mining District.

There are fourteen trailheads in the Corridor. Trails access the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, the Beartooth High Lakes Wilderness Study Area, the Beartooth Loop National Recreation Trail, and the North Absaroka Wilderness.

VISUALS

The distinctive alpine scenery along the Beartooth Corridor is considered by many to be unsurpassed in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Some would argue that the Beartooth Highway is the most spectacular highway in the United States. In the Rock Creek drainage, imposing canyon walls and distant peaks dominate the view. Campgrounds, group camps, and summer homes are inconspicuous. From Rock Creek Vista Point, the only evidence of human use aside from the highway are the scars of old mining roads across the canyon.

Once on the Plateau, the view is pristine until visitors reach the state line where highway management signs, National Forest and state boundary signs, and Forest Service travel management signs interrupt the view. The Red Lodge Race Camp ski area is two miles further, and the lift towers seem out of place in the precipitous Twin Lakes Cirque. At the West Summit Overlook, a toilet and garbage cans are silhouetted against distant peaks. Despite this intrusion, the view of the glaciated Plateau and the abundant peaks of the North Absaroka Wilderness is extraordinary.

Due to the lack of forest cover, vehicles parked along the highway and at trailheads near the highway are highly visible. Dispersed campsites between Long Lake and Little Bear Lake are also easily visible.

The Top of the World Store complex lies adjacent to the highway. The store appears rustic, but the motel units and trailers parked in the trailer court stand out against the surrounding forest.

The panoramic view from Clay Butte Lookout is exceptional. The view of a pristine environment is interrupted by a few distant buildings, a glimpse of the highway, and obscure clearcuts from the Clover Mist Fire salvage sales.

From the Pilot-Index and Clarks Fork Overlooks, views of Pilot and Index Peaks and the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River Valley are remarkable. Salvage clearcuts across the valley are noticeable.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

An understanding of the affected environment is essential to evaluate the alternatives. This section describes environmental components that would affect or would be affected by implementation of alternatives. Physical, biological, and socioeconomic elements are described.

LOCATION

The Beartooth Highway, a portion of U.S. Highway 212, stretches 69 miles from Red Lodge, Montana to the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone Park. This highway lies within the Greater Yellowstone Area which encompasses almost twelve million acres of National Forest, National Park, National Wildlife Refuge, State, Bureau of Land Management, and private lands within Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho (Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee, 1987).

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

U.S. Highway 212 approaches the massive Beartooth Mountain uplift from the rolling hills of the Yellowstone River valley. Just beyond Red Lodge the Beartooth Highway enters Rock Creek Canyon, carved by glaciers over 10,000 years ago. Dwarfed by towering cliffs of granite bedrock and snow-capped peaks, the highway parallels Rock Creek for several miles before beginning a dramatic 3,000-foot climb up the famous switchbacks. The traveler climbs from the grasslands near Red Lodge to the alpine of the Beartooth Plateau in a matter of minutes.

Within fourteen miles the highway crosses two passes, both over 10,900 feet. After the West Summit, the highway descends through the subalpine zone and disappears into spruce-fir forests before reaching Beartooth Lake. Beartooth Butte looms above the lake, exposing formations of ancient sediments that once covered the entire Plateau.

From Beartooth Lake, the highway drops into the Clarks Fork Valley. After passing the junction of Wyoming Highway 296, the Chief Joseph Scenic Highway, the highway parallels the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River.

Pilot and Index Peaks dominate the western horizon as the highway rises toward headwaters of the Clarks Fork. It crosses Colter Pass and drops into the Soda Butte drainage, just east of the historic mining town of Cooke City. From Cooke City, the highway follows Soda Butte Creek to Yellowstone National Park's Northeast Entrance. Massive peaks rise abruptly from the narrow valley and the corridor is forested. The tiny community of Silver Gate lies just outside the Park.

CLIMATE

Both passes on the Beartooth Highway are snowbound from October until late May when snowplows open the road. Campgrounds above 8,000 feet do not open till the first weekend in July. Summer showers are common, and temperatures generally range from the 30's to the high 60's. Snowstorms can occur anytime, but usually the Corridor is snow free until the end of September. The highway is closed in October, when maintenance is no longer cost-effective.

Figure 2. COMPARISON OF FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

This table displays the number of developments proposed by each alternative. The No Action alternative, Alternative A, indicates existing facilities.

Developments	A	B	C	D
Visitor Centers	0	1	1	2
Information Sites (Staffed)	1	3	2	1
Information Sites (Not staffed)	0	2	2	2
Interpretive Developments	4	26	10	17
New Campsites In Campgrounds	0	20	12	52
Picnic Grounds	2	2	4	6
Approach Signs	36	84	54	72

Figure 1. COMPARISON BY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE

The relative ability of each alternative to meet Management Objectives is displayed in this table. A rating of four indicates the most successful and one the least.

Management Objectives	A	B	C	D
Visual Quality	3	1	4	2
Semiprimitive Setting	3	2	4	1
Interpretation and Information	1	2	3	4
Protect Fragile Alpine Environment	3	2	4	1
Improve Facilities	1	2	3	4
Provide Mix of Opportunities	2	3	4	1
Improve Customer Satisfaction	3	2	4	1
Promote Economic Opportunities	1	2	3	4

Objective #8 - Promote Economic Opportunities

The Intensive Development alternative would best promote economic opportunities. Promotional efforts would bring more visitors, carrying capacity of developed sites would be highest, and more maintenance workers would be employed. The Proposed Action would promote economic opportunity by providing a greater variety of recreation opportunities. There would be no new Forest Service campgrounds to take potential customers away from commercial campgrounds in gateway communities. However, the Forest Service would not promote additional use, and carrying capacity would be lower than under the Intensive Development alternative. The Forest Plan alternative would promote economic opportunities by increasing campground capacity, and improving information and interpretation services. The No Action alternative would not promote economic opportunities.

Objective #3 - Provide Interpretation and Information

The Intensive Development alternative would have the most positive impact on interpretation and information opportunities. Promotional activities would present information, and the visitor center at Clay Butte would provide a good location for interpretive services. The Forest Plan alternative would develop numerous interpretive exhibits and information sites. Visitors who would take the time to read all the exhibits would be well informed. The Proposed Action would provide a variety of interpretive and informational opportunities, but not to the magnitude of the Forest Plan or Intensive Development alternatives. The No Action alternative provides few opportunities for information, and interpretation is limited.

Objective #4 - Protect Fragile Alpine Environment

The Proposed Action provides the most protection to the alpine environment. Dispersed recreation management would reduce current abuses, and developments would be limited. Although the No Action alternative would not directly impact the environment, it would do nothing to control dispersed recreation use. The Forest Plan alternative would not control dispersed recreation, and numerous waysides would attract use onto fragile areas. The Intensive Development alternative would cause direct impacts due to facility development and increased recreation use. It would provide some protection by eliminating dispersed camping.

Objective #5 - Improve Recreation Facilities

The Intensive Development alternative would have the most positive impact on recreation facilities. All facilities would be upgraded to modern standards and new developments would provide capacity for growing demand. The Proposed Action would bring facilities up to standard, and campground enlargement and picnic area development would help meet demand. The Forest Plan alternative would provide more campground capacity, but facilities would not be upgraded. The No Action alternative is the least desirable because it would not improve facilities or develop new ones.

Objective #6 - Provide a Mix of Recreation Opportunities

The Proposed Action would provide the visitor ample opportunity to enjoy interpretive services, picnic, or camp in rustic or modern campgrounds. Better management would improve distribution and allow dispersed camping. The Forest Plan alternative would provide excellent interpretive services, more developed camping, and unlimited dispersed recreation. The No Action alternative would sustain the current mix of opportunities. The Intensive Development alternative would provide the most developed recreation opportunities, but the freedom to camp in dispersed sites or enjoy activities in a semiprimitive setting would be compromised.

Objective #7 - Improve Management and Customer Satisfaction

The Proposed Action would have the most positive effect on customer satisfaction. Coordination would lead to high quality management, and interpretive and informational developments would be strategically located. The No Action alternative would not improve management or customer satisfaction, but scoping suggests that many users would prefer current management or minimum development to more intensive development. The Intensive Development alternative would result in better management, but more developments would increase visitation and competition for limited resources. The Forest Plan alternative would do little to improve management, and numerous waysides would be unacceptable to the public.

Recreation Management

Implement recreation management as in Alternative C with the following changes:

Close Corridor to dispersed camping.

Develop brochure to promote use of the Scenic Byway and provide information.

Produce video to promote Corridor recreation opportunities to the general public.

Maintain ROS classification as Roaded Natural.

Mitigation

New developments would blend with the environment and be constructed of maintenance-free materials. All developments would be barrier-free. Sites would be designed to maintain a Roaded Natural setting.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

This section provides a comparison of alternatives by Management Objective. These comparisons can be used to evaluate the alternatives and determine preferred management. Figure 1 displays the relative ability of each alternative to meet the objectives. Figure 2 displays the number of developments proposed by each alternative.

Objective #1 - Maintain or Improve Visual Quality

The Proposed Action would have the most positive impact on visual quality. Measures to control dispersed recreation and roadside parking, and elimination of obtrusive facilities would improve visual quality. Interpretive exhibits and other facilities would be located strategically to minimize visual impact. The No Action alternative would not remove obtrusive facilities or manage recreation use that degrades visual quality. The Forest Plan alternative would also fail to remove obtrusive facilities and improve dispersed recreation management. Facilities at numerous interpretive waysides and new parking areas adjacent to the highway would have a negative impact on visual quality. The numerous developments of the Intensive Development alternative would also degrade visual quality. Management would eliminate visual disruptions from dispersed camping which would continue to some degree under the other alternatives.

Objective #2 - Maintain Semiprimitive Setting

The Proposed Action would have the most favorable impact on the semiprimitive setting, but proposed developments would cause some adverse impacts. Removal of certain facilities and management of dispersed recreation would support the setting. Changing the ROS classification to Semiprimitive Motorized would prevent future incremental development and sustain the semiprimitive setting (Stankey, 1989). The No Action alternative would maintain the setting in the short run, but the Roaded Natural ROS classification would allow future development. The Forest Plan alternative would have an adverse impact on setting due to the number of waysides and lack of recreation management. The Intensive Development alternative would have the most negative effect due to its level of development and focus on Corridor promotion.

Convene annual coordination meeting between the three Forests and Yellowstone Park. Shoshone Forest would help Gallatin Forest manage recreation use in Cooke City area. Custer Forest would administer the Red Lodge Race Camp ski area.

Change the ROS classification from Roaded Natural to Semiprimitive Motorized from the switchbacks to Pilot-Index Overlook.

Do not permit expansion of trailer court or motel at Top of the World Store. Do not allow OHV or mountain bike rentals, or the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Mitigation

New developments would blend with the environment and be constructed of maintenance-free materials. All developments would be barrier-free. Measures to contain dispersed camping would be unobtrusive.

Alternative D - Intensive Development

In addition to facilities proposed in Alternative C, the Intensive Development alternative would develop new campgrounds and picnic grounds, and several overlooks. Existing campgrounds, Top of the World Store, and Clay Butte Lookout would be transformed into modern, full-service facilities. Dispersed camping would be prohibited and recreation opportunities would be promoted.

Visitor Service Facilities

Facilities would include those in Alternative C with the following changes:

Upgrade all campgrounds with paved roads and parking spurs, and flush-type toilets. Raise fees to $12.

Develop twenty-unit, fee campgrounds at Lily Lake and Rainbow Lake.

Develop picnic grounds at Long Lake and at Clarks Fork River site across from Pilot Creek trailhead.

Pave the road to West Summit Overlook; develop new toilets and interpretive displays.

Upgrade Clay Butte Lookout to a full service visitor center

Construct interpretive exhibits at the following locations:

Bear's Tooth Overlook.
Onemile Creek Overlook
State line wayside - East
State line wayside - West

Replace rustic, routed signs with modern reflectorized signs for maximum visibility. Use recreation symbols and international symbols where appropriate. Post Scenic Byway signs on all route markers.

Expand Top of the World Store into a full-service resort with additional accommodations and a cafe. Permit rental of mountain bikes and canoes.

Provide bulletin boards with low impact information and travel regulations at trailheads and at the Morrison and Fantan jeep roads.

Improve the Morrison jeep road for one third mile and develop a trailhead and parking away from the highway. Move closure gate beyond parking area.

Move Hauser Lake Trailhead to new Morrison Trailhead. Construct short section of trail to connect Beartooth Loop Trail to new trailhead.

Construct small parking area one half mile south of highway on Fantan Road. Move closure gate just beyond parking area.

Remove toilet, garbage cans, and wooden barriers at West Summit Overlook. Develop natural rock barriers.

Remove toilet at Pilot-Index Overlook.

Install rustic, routed signs with reflective lettering along entire corridor (Appendix B, Sign Plan). Sign approaches to trailheads, points of interest, overlooks, and campgrounds. Reduce administrative signs at the state line near Red Lodge. Install approach signs to parking areas at Lake Creek Falls. Develop information/destination signs at the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone Park, the junction of WY 296 and the Beartooth Highway, at the Custer Forest Boundary, and on WY 296 at the Shoshone Forest Boundary.

Recreation Management

Obtain scenic easements from RDS, B4, and L Bar T ranches.

Use natural barriers to restrict dispersed camping in highway foreground and in sensitive areas.

Contain recreation use at popular dispersed sites that are suitable for continued use, including the Long Lake area, Morrison area, and the sheep corrals. Develop primitive vault toilets if sanitation becomes a problem.

Encourage new campground development on private land near gateway communities. Change length of stay limitations in the most popular campgrounds from fourteen to seven days.

Provide Forest Service employee to patrol Corridor and help visitors.

Coordinate Campground Host program, and establish radio communications between each campground and with information sites. Maximize the distribution of campsites through communication, rather than a reservation system. Maintain a Corridor Host at the Northeast Entrance to provide information.

Develop Corridor brochure to provide information and interpretation, but not to promote increased use. Depict overlooks, campgrounds, trailheads, information sites, Top of the World Store, and managed dispersed sites.

Develop Corridor video to market Scenic Byway recreation opportunities to non-traditional users and to enlist support for management programs. Do not use video to promote use by traditional users.

Reconstruct Rock Creek Vista Point as a first class rest area with high volume toilets, and interpretation and information services. Improve highway safety markings and approach signing.

Develop interpretive exhibits and a picnic ground at Clarks Fork Overlook. Coordinate a Stop Cancer memorial with American Cancer Society.

Reopen the Chief Joseph Campground as a picnic ground. Renovate with barrier-free facilities.

Construct unobtrusive and maintenance-free interpretive exhibits at the following locations. Topics would include geology and glaciation, alpine ecology, fire ecology, and wildlife ecology with special emphasis on alpine species and grizzly bears. The history of the Beartooth Highway, National Forest management, cultural history, wilderness, and the Greater Yellowstone Area would be discussed.

Rock Creek Vista Point
West Summit Overlook
Clay Butte Lookout
Pilot-Index Overlook
Clarks Fork Overlook
Onemile Creek Overlook
Colter Pass Exhibit
Cooke City Historic Exhibit

Develop barrier-free trail and viewing area, and more parking at Crazy Creek Falls.

Construct more parking at Bear's Tooth Viewpoint.

Install traffic control barriers and manage dispersed camping at Lily Lake to reduce resource damage. Do not develop a fee campground.

Renovate the following campgrounds. Restore run down facilities with high caliber, rustic replacements. Install a barrier-free toilet and modify several units to barrier-free standards in each campground. Enlarge some units for RVs. Install dumpsters and eliminate garbage cans. Raise fees to be compatible with similar facilities in Yellowstone Park.

M-K
Island Lake
Crazy Creek
Fox Creek
Colter

Replace two camping units on east side of Island Lake Campground access road with picnic and day use facilities. Develop two replacement units in Loop B.

Renovate and modernize Soda Butte Campground. Provide toilets with water and electricity.

Renovate Beartooth Lake Campground and construct twelve new campsites. Relocate the Beartooth Creek Trailhead in Loop C.

Beartooth Lake

Implement Interpretive Plan on Gallatin:

Develop information sites at Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone Park and in Cooke City.

Develop Woody Creek interpretive trail.

Develop Daisy Pass auto tour.

Construct the following waysides:

State line
Western Power
Colter Pass
Cooke City cemetery
Cooke City
Avalanche
Hour Glass Falls

Mitigation

Waysides would blend with the environment and be constructed of maintenance-free materials. All developments would be barrier-free. Lily Lake Campground would accommodate large recreational vehicles (RVs), but utilities and flush toilets would not be provided.

Alternative C - Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would provide interpretive exhibits and recreation information at strategic locations. Facilities would be well-spaced throughout the Corridor (map, Appendix D-3). Recreation management would be coordinated among the Forests and with Yellowstone Park. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classification would be changed from Roaded Natural to Semiprimitive Motorized. Most campgrounds would be renovated, but kept rustic. Soda Butte Campground would be modernized. Trailheads would be modified to distribute recreation use and provide additional capacity. Parking areas would be located away from the highway and some facilities would be removed to improve visual quality.

Visitor Service Facilities

Develop a modest, 400 square-foot, visitor center near Red Lodge at the Beartooth Ranger District Office. Operate an Interpretive Association sales outlet.

Develop a staffed Forest Service/Park Service visitor information site in Cooke City.

Place information kiosks in each campground.

Remodel the information and interpretive site at Clay Butte Lookout. Staff with an interpreter.

Develop a public information site and rest area at Top of the World Store. Install two public toilets. Develop an outdoor picnic area and enclosed warming shelter. Enlarge parking area to accommodate RVs. Add log siding to the motel and landscape the trailer court. Improve signing. Develop barrier-free access to entire facility.

ALTERNATIVES STUDIED IN DETAIL

Four alternatives are described and studied in detail. Descriptions provide explanations of facility development and recreation management.

Alternative A - No Action

The No Action alternative perpetuates current management, and existing facilities would be maintained (map, Appendix D-1). The Affected Environment discussion describes current management and facilities.

Alternative B - Implement Forest Plans

The Forest Plan alternative would implement direction in the Custer, Gallatin, and Shoshone Forest Plans (Custer National Forest, 1986; Gallatin National Forest, 1986; Shoshone National Forest, 1986). These plans support current recreation management. However, the Shoshone Plan specifies development of a 20-unit campground at Lily Lake and implementation of the Beartooth Corridor Interpretive Plan (Esmiol and Schlamp, 1978). Written in 1978 but never implemented, this plan envisions over 36 developments along the Beartooth Highway (Interpretive Plan Summary, Appendix C). The Custer and Gallatin Forest Plans did not specify implementation of the Interpretive Plan, but implementation would meet their recreation goals. The Forest Plan alternative considers Interpretive Plan implementation throughout the Corridor (map, Appendix D-2).

Implement Interpretive Plan on Custer:

Develop Beartooth District office visitor center.

Develop interpretive trails at Parkside complex and at Lion's Camp.

Construct the following waysides:

Forest boundary
Rock Creek Vista Point
Dike

Implement Interpretive Plan on Shoshone:

Upgrade Clay Butte Lookout to an information site.

Construct the following waysides:

State line
Twin Lakes
East Summit
Tundra
Bear's Tooth
West Summit
Creeping trees
Tundra roll
Long Lake
Chain Lakes
Island Lake

compromised, but the growing demand of driving for pleasure should be satisfied. Management should strive to increase use by non-traditional users including urban minorities, the disadvantaged, and the elderly.

Objective #7 - Improve Management and Customer Satisfaction

The Forest Service should strive to improve customer satisfaction through high quality recreation management. Direction, law enforcement, and facility maintenance should be consistent throughout the Corridor. Managers should consider opportunities to better serve recreation customers by sharing responsibilities between Forests and agencies.

Objective #8 - Promote Economic Opportunities

The economies of Red Lodge, Cooke City, and Silver Gate can be affected by recreation management, so alternatives should consider local economic impact and promote opportunities.

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

This section describes the Proposed Action and alternatives. These were developed after considering public input and Forest Service goals, doing research, thoroughly analyzing management, and discussing administrative options with agency personnel. The Proposed Action and alternatives studied in detail are compared to the Management Objectives.

ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

Besides the four alternatives studied in detail, other management proposals were considered. Several are described below, and the reasons for not considering them in detail are given.

Do Not Manage Recreation Use

Abandonment of existing developments and cessation of management activities would violate the Forest Service mission. Resource damage would take place, and the public would be deprived of many recreation opportunities. This would be irresponsible land management and poor politics.

Develop Public Resorts

This alternative would allow new commercial resorts to be developed on National Forest System lands. This idea was unacceptable to the public and would not meet Management Objectives.

Discontinue Red Lodge Race Camp Permit

This alternative would remove the Red Lodge Race Camp ski area, but the decision would be beyond the scope of this project. However, continued ski area operation may not be compatible with the Management Objectives. Before reissuance of the permit in 2001, a future use analysis based on these objectives should be done.

- showcase visually appealing scenery
- promote understanding of resource management
- conserve the sense of naturalness
- provide a mix of recreation opportunities
- market National Forests to non-traditional users
- meet growing recreation demand

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Public issues and management goals were consolidated and summarized into Management Objectives. These objectives provide the basis of comparison on which the Proposed Action and alternatives are evaluated.

Objective #1 - Maintain or Improve Visual Quality

Visual quality should be maintained or improved, and the integrity of scenic viewsheds should not be compromised. The Visual Quality Objective is Retention. Recreation developments may exceed Retention guidelines, but facilities should be unobtrusive.

Objective #2 - Maintain Semiprimitive Setting

The semiprimitive setting should be preserved, especially between Pilot-Index Overlook and the switchbacks above Red Lodge. Management strategies should allow freedom to pursue recreation activities in a reasonably unregulated environment. Facilities should be compatible with the semiprimitive setting and cause minimal environmental impact. One of the greatest legacies the Forest Service can provide is the opportunity to experience the natural world (Feuchter, 1989).

Objective #3 - Provide Interpretation and Information

Interpretation and information services should be accessible and strategically located. Interpretive displays should provide information about National Forest System lands, multiple use management, and the unique resources of the Corridor (Coutant, 1989). Signing should be adequate so visitors know where they are and what facilities are available. The public should be informed of unusual safety hazards (Hronek, 1989).

Objective #4 - Protect Fragile Alpine Environment

Recreation management should protect fragile alpine soils and vegetation. Dispersed use and the cumulative impacts of development should be controlled to prevent resource damage.

Objective #5 - Improve Recreation Facilities

Developments should be adequate to meet increasing demand. High quality facilities should be attractive, barrier-free, and strategically located.

Objective #6 - Provide A Mix of Recreation Opportunities

The Forest Service should manage the Corridor to provide a mix of recreation opportunities that meets public need. Future opportunities to have a semiprimitive recreation experience must not be

The Beartooth District office is in Red Lodge, Montana. The Gardiner office is in Gardiner, Montana, about an hour west of the Corridor, and the Clarks Fork office is in Powell, Wyoming, approximately two hours east. The Crandall Work Center on the Shoshone is located nine miles from the Corridor along Wyoming Highway 296.

Because the highway begins and ends in Montana, the Wyoming Highway Department has never accepted jurisdiction or maintenance responsibility for the section in Wyoming. Crews from Yellowstone Park maintain the highway from the Northeast Entrance to the Montana state line near Red Lodge. The Montana Highway Department maintains that portion from the state line to Red Lodge.

This project provided an excellent opportunity to survey the public and determine the Corridor values they consider most important. Scoping should reach the "right" people to be most effective (Feuchter, 1989). In December, 1989, the Beartooth Highway Corridor Development Survey was sent to individuals and groups familiar with the Corridor, and the Beartooth Highway Visitor Survey was done in August, 1990.

SCOPE

This paper considers recreation management from May 15 through October 15, and a one-mile wide corridor from Red Lodge to the Northeast Entrance is analyzed. The focus is on recreation management and development of facilities such as overlooks, picnic areas, interpretive displays, and trailheads. Dispersed and developed recreation management options are evaluated.

ISSUES AND GOALS

Selection of a preferred recreation management strategy is based on its ability to address public issues and meet management goals. Issues are topics or questions relating to National Forest management that are of widespread public interest. Management goals are derived from national and regional Forest Service policies, and individual Forest Plans.

Preliminary issues were identified through analysis of past public involvement and informal public contacts. The Beartooth Highway Corridor Development Survey and the Beartooth Highway Visitor Survey validated existing issues and defined new ones (see Consultation and Coordination - Scoping for analysis of each survey).

Important public issues include:

- maintaining scenic quality
- preserving the semiprimitive setting
- protecting the fragile environment
- regulating public use
- providing information and interpretation
- providing adequate recreation facilities
- promoting economic opportunity

Forest Service goals include:

- contribute to the National Scenic Byway effort
- manage recreation resources to satisfy customers
- provide interpretive opportunities

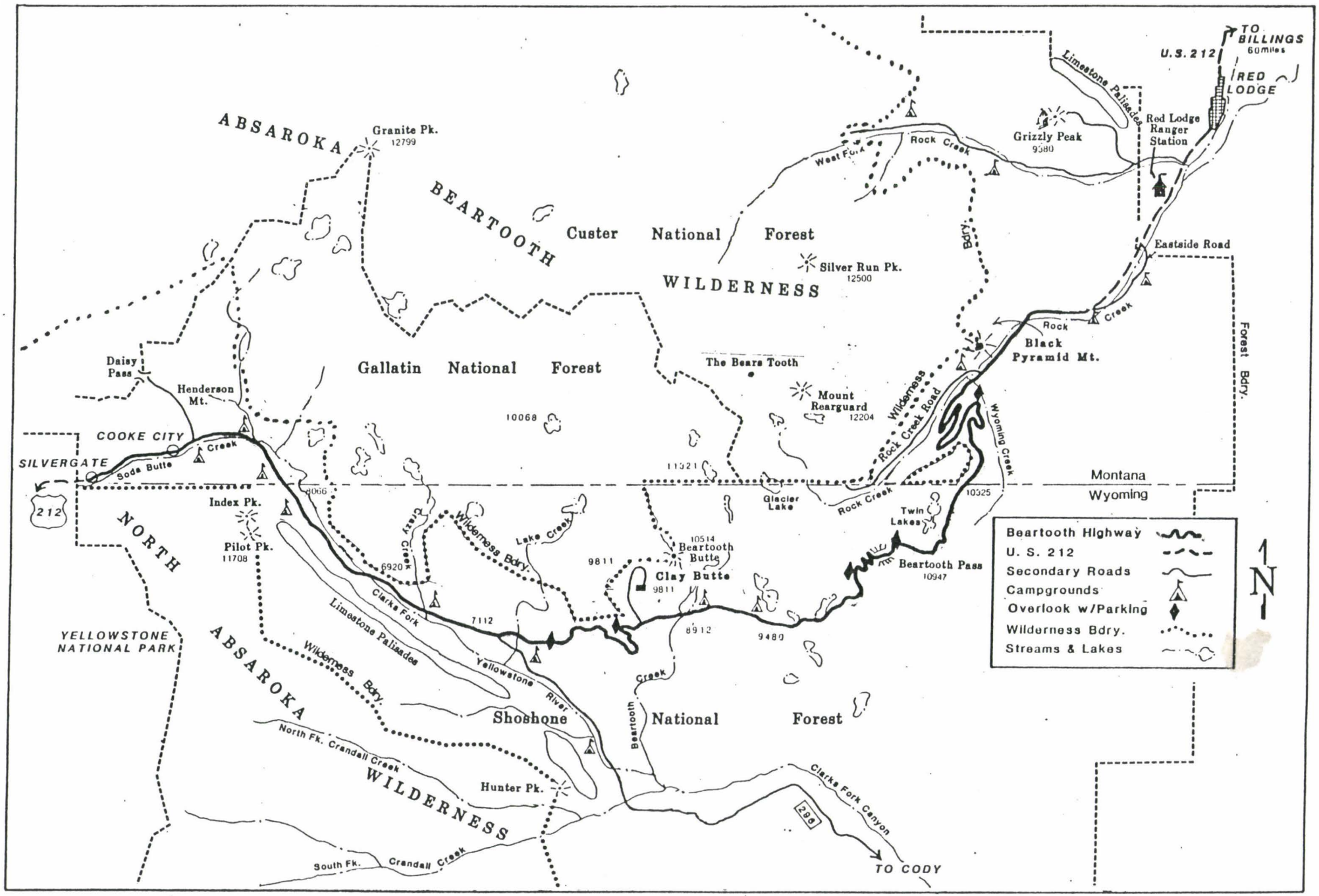
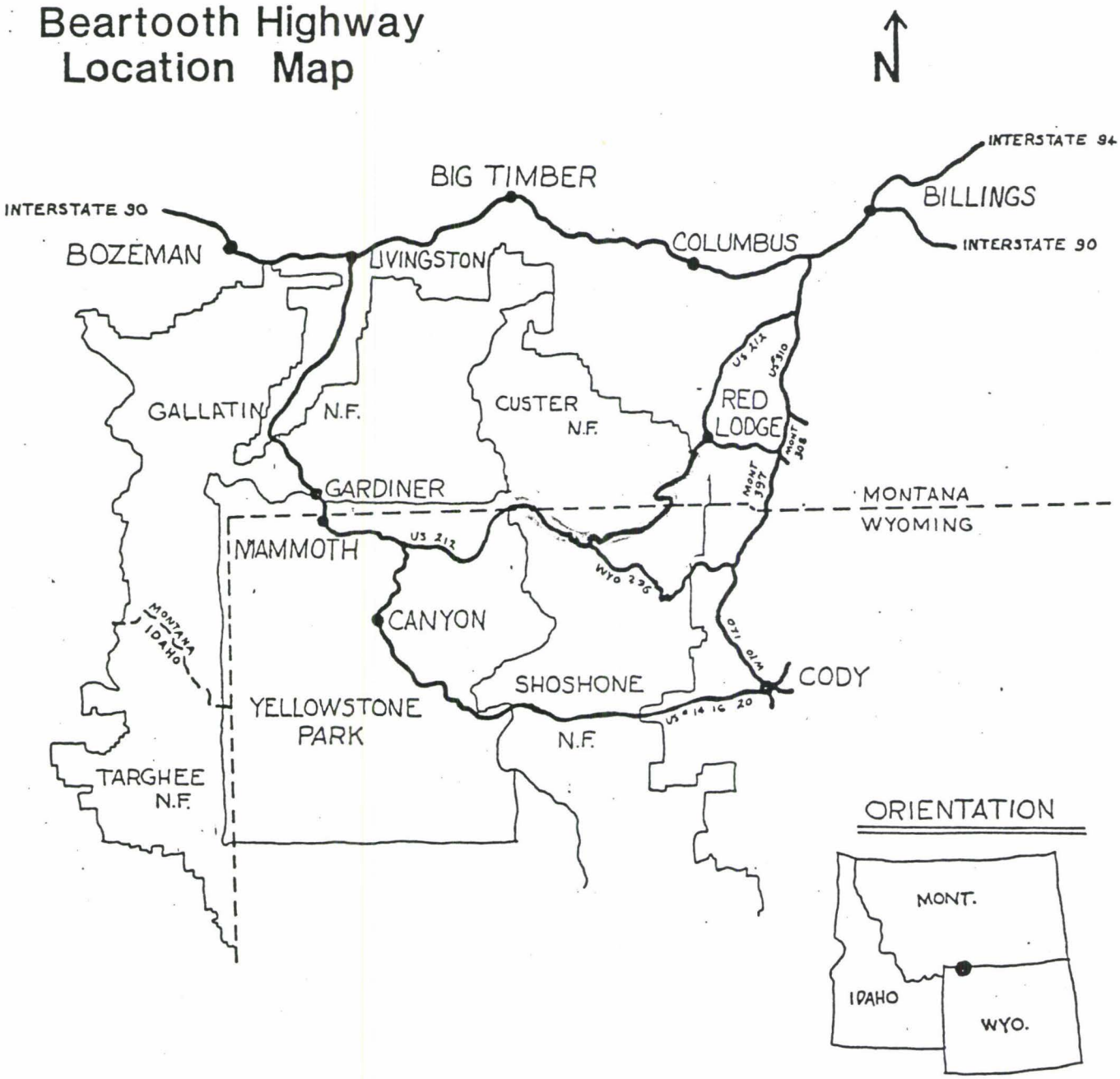

TO BILLINGS
60 miles
U.S. 212
RED LODGE
Limestone Palisades
Red Lodge Ranger Station
Grizzly Peak
9380
ABSAROKA
Granite Pk.
12799
BEARTOOTH
Custer National Forest
WILDERNESS
Silver Run Pk.
12500
West Fork
Rock Creek
Bdry.
Eastside Road
Forest Bdry.
Rock Creek
Black Pyramid Mt.
Daisy Pass
Henderson Mt.
Gallatin National Forest
The Bears Tooth
Mount Rearguard
12204
10068
Wilderness
Rock Creek Road
Wyoming Creek
COOKE CITY
SILVERGATE
Soda Butte Creek
11521
Montana
Wyoming
212
Index Pk.
8066
Glacier Lake
Rock Creek
10325
Twin Lakes
Pilot Pk.
11708
NORTH
Crazy Cr.
Wilderness Bdry.
Lake Creek
10514
Beartooth Butte
9811
Clay Butte
9811
Beartooth Pass
10947
6920
Clarks Fork
Limestone Palisades
7112
8912
9480
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
ABSAROKA
Wilderness Bdry.
Yellowstone River
Creek
Beartooth
Shoshone National Forest
North Fk. Crandall Creek
WILDERNESS
Hunter Pk.
Clarks Fork Canyon
296
South Fk. Crandall Creek
TO CODY
Beartooth Highway
U. S. 212
Secondary Roads
Campgrounds
Overlook w/Parking
Wilderness Bdry.
Streams & Lakes
N

EXHIBIT II

EXHIBIT I

Beartooth Highway
Location Map



BEARTOOTH SCENIC BYWAY

RECREATION MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

PURPOSE AND NEED

Custer, Gallatin, and Shoshone National Forest managers have long recognized the need for state-of-the-art recreation management within the Beartooth Corridor, but lack of a comprehensive Corridor management strategy have made this an elusive goal. In 1989, the highway was designated a National Scenic Byway, highlighting the need for better customer service and recreation management. Existing information and interpretive services are limited. Facilities, including rest areas, trailheads, picnic areas, and campgrounds, are inadequate. Uncontrolled dispersed recreation use is damaging fragile soils and vegetation, and management is not integrated between the National Forests and Yellowstone National Park.

The intent of this proposal is to recommend recreation management and facility development that would promote a high quality recreation experience and protect the unique resources of the Beartooth Corridor. Public issues and Forest Service goals are summarized to establish Management Objectives, and the Proposed Action and alternatives are developed and analyzed. Components of the environment that would affect or would be affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives are discussed, and potential environmental consequences of implementation are explained.

This paper will be used to present recreation management alternatives to the public. After public input and preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) by the Forest Service, the Forest Supervisors will state recreation development and management decisions in a Decision Notice.

BACKGROUND

The Park Approach Act of 1931 authorized the Department of Interior to construct the Beartooth Highway (Schaller, 1988). Construction began in 1932 and the highway was opened to the public on June 14, 1936. The Corridor immediately became popular with travelers to Yellowstone Park. The first recreation facilities were constructed in the 1930's and many campgrounds and overlooks were built in the 1960's.

Except for a few parcels of private land and the town sites of Silver Gate and Cooke City, the Corridor is on National Forest System lands. The eastern end, in Montana, is managed by the Beartooth District of the Custer Forest. The middle portion lies in Wyoming on the Clarks Fork District of the Shoshone Forest. Eight miles of the west end are within the Gardiner District of the Gallatin Forest.

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20. What should the Forest Service do to improve the Beartooth Corridor?

(see response to #21)

21. Other comments and suggestions...

Develop picnic area near entrance to Clay Butte road.
Keep Clay Butte Lookout open and staffed.
Develop simple interpretive plaques.
Develop campground near high lakes, if compatible.
Don't "manage" everything.
Increase interpretation and low impact use information.
Designate mountain bike trails.
Limit hiking and walking in fragile areas.
Educate users about fragile alpine vegetation.
Need passing lanes on highway.
Develop more "distance information" signing.
Chief Joseph CG needs work.
Develop more information boards.
Do nothing - leave it wild.
Develop picnic area and information center at TOWS.
Add restrooms at overlooks.
Need more elevation signs.
Need more approach signs for overlooks.
Don't develop the Beartooth Highway.
Restrict mining.
Avoid too much development and commercialization.
Need more information at TOWS.
Don't encourage more visitors.
Don't develop more facilities.
Keep it as primitive as possible.
Preserve uncluttered character.
Put West Summit toilet underground to improve view.
Need better signing on trails and at trailheads.
Need signs with lake names.
Develop information or visitor center at TOWS.
Maintain the "wilderness" feel.
Publicize road hazards, so visitors know what they're getting into.
Widen and repair highway.
Develop information center in Red Lodge.
Can't tell that overlooks have restrooms.
Highway is too narrow for RVs.
Develop more campgrounds at higher elevations.
Need visitor center at West Summit.
Red Lodge Ranger Station closed for lunch until 1:30!
Leave it alone!
Clean up deadfall - it's a fire hazard.
Develop cafe, bar, restrooms at top of Pass.
Develop better restrooms at TOWS.
No new developments!!!
Need more visitor information at each end.
Trails need more signing at trailheads.
Add "Picnic Area" sign to Beartooth CG sign.

Develop picnic area at Island Lake.
Need to maintain present facilities better.
Contain use in already developed areas.
Post signs warning RVs to use pullouts to allow passing
Need picnic area and information at TOWS.
Approach sign to Chief Joseph CG was too close to turnoff.
Maintain CG roads more often to prevent washboarding.
Provide visitor information services in Cooke City.
Staff Cooke Pass Guard Station and sign it on highway.
Do not develp more facilities.
Need to provide more information.
Leave it alone!
Improve campground approach roads.
Develop more camping units in Beartooth and Island Lake Campgrounds.
Need more mileage signs.
Develop visitor center at TOWS.
Upgrade toilets to chemical flush types.
Keep corridor as natural as possible.
Develop information center and picnic area at TOWS.
Need better signing at each end showing facility locations.
Develop and provide interpretive audio tape.
Develop picnic area at Pilot-Index overlook.
Develop new campground at Long Lake or Fantan Lake.
Develop better restrooms at TOWS open to public.
Develop visitor center at Junction WY 296.
Develop picnic area with toilet.
Keep TOWS personal "Mom and Pop" operation.
Map some of the non-system trails.
Some sections of road marked "safe to pass" are not good for passing.
Campground rules should specify "quiet hours".
Need more campground capacity.
Corridor facilities are crowded - may want reservation system and more campgrounds.
Develop visitor center at base of Clay Butte.
Develop larger trailer court at TOWS.
Widen Clay Butte road.
Develop trails on alpine areas to protect fragile vegetation.
Keep it wild!
Develop picnic area and larger trailer court at TOWS.
Leave the area alone - preserve the wild characterand the sense of adventure.
If you have to provide more facilities, please centralize them, maybe at TOWS.
Please leave it undeveloped.
TOWS looked like at tourist trap.
Develop a brochure to read about corridor as you drive.
Need information center at TOWS.
Identify mountain peaks.
Need better restroom at TOWS.
Maintain that undeveloped character.
Develop picnic area near Clay Butte trailhead.
Improve information center at Clay Butte Lookout.
Develop "Corridor" map, so one doesn't need three maps.
Develop vistor center at campground.
Educate visitors how special this area is, especially the alpine area.
Enlarge existing campgrounds.

Need better information on fishing remote lakes.
Develop shower concessions on each side of Pass.
Rate campground units - #1 units for long RVs, $10; #2 good spots, $7.50; #3 run of the mill, $5. Too often, tenters take up good RV sites. Remaining spots will not accomodate RVs.
Need telephone at TOWS.
Widen entrance to Beartooth Lake CG, or remove gate.
Keep it simple - as is.
Develop picnic area at TOWS.
Develop visitor center at West Summit.
Leave the Corridor alone.
Too much traffic.
Add more units at Beartooth Lake and Island Lake.
Develop visitor center at TOWS.
Develop campground near bottom of valley.
Keep it pristine.
Need public phone for emergency calls.
Hope it looks as good the next visit as now.
I truly like the naturalness of area.
"Fix" the restrooms and provide more.
Picnic area and information services at TOWS.
Leave it alone - you'll ruin it. Don't over-manage.
Didn't like toilet at West Summit.
Explain fishing regulations.
Develop visitor centers at Cooke City and Rock Creek Campground.
Clay Butte volunteers are good source of information.
Need slight widening of narrowest roads.
Widen roads at campground entrances.
Develop larger trailer court at TOWS.
Develop cafe at TOWS.
Didn't like the logging trucks on WY 296.
Don't need ATVs running in campgrounds.
Restrooms in campgrounds are inadequate.
Garbage removal in campgrounds is inadequate.
Improve backcountry roads - Fantan Lake road.
Remove Park Service control of US 212.
Need more motels and campgrounds in Cooke City area.
Need more NF camping units in Cooke City area.
Need better maintenance of restrooms.
Keep the area as natural as possible.
Didn't like commercialism in Cooke City.
Try to keep the Corridor a secret.
Maintain wilderness environment.
Keep it as true to nature as possible.
Provide firewood at campsites.
Develop RV facilities at TOWS.
Develop better access to high lakes.
Develop campgrounds at Chain Lakes and Long Lake.
Develop info center and decent restrooms at TOWS.
Develop picnic area, info center, cafe, and more motel units at TOWS.
Don't develop too much, the scenery speaks for itself.
Have firewood for sale in campgrounds.
Development would ruin alpine ecosystem.

Salvage burned timber and interpret results.
Don't want to see another Yellowstone.
Need signs of mountain names and elevations.
Need more lodging and eating facilities.
No signs in Red Lodge to indicate where information was available.
Need outdoor picnic area and info center at TOWS.
Need more information.
Develop interpretive markers at overlooks.
Area is too fragile for further development.
Need approach signs to overlooks, trailheads, etc..
Don't need visitor centers if Red Lodge and Cooke City already have place for it, i.e. grocery store, chambers of commerce, etc..
Restrooms should be clean.
Need more hazard warning signs on highway.
Have visitor center at each end.
Make it mandatory for drivers to know road conditions.
Visitors need information to have "worry-free" drive.
Provide more information.
May need first aid station at TOWS.
Caution travelers about hazardous weather conditions.
Widen narrow roads near top.
Complete paving on WY 296.
Provide public phone at TOWS.
Cut your advertising budget - people will ruin it all.
Exhibits could interfere with raw beauty of the place, but information adds to the appreciation. How about a booklet about geology and ecology, including a part on trails, with unobtrusive signs with numbers keyed to map and text that direct attention to features.
Keep it wild and undeveloped - not another Yosemite.
Indicate trails that are suitable for mountain bikes.
Some trails should be closed to mountain bikes.
Develop information center at TOWS.
Hard to find information on Cooke City end.
Need signs with horizon profiles and peak names.
Do not let it become a National Park which brings too much red tape and restrictions.
Need more information at TOWS.
Need more information about trails, lakes, and rivers.
Provide information through brochures and booklets.
Incorporate picnic areas with overlooks.
Need picnic area at TOWS.
Corridor should remain as primitive as possible.
Develop an information center and picnic area at TOWS.

AGENCY COORDINATION

Forest Service

Bernie Spanogle	Resource Staff	Shoshone N.F.
James Nye	Landscape Architect	Shoshone N.F.
Randall Herzberg	District Ranger	Clarks Fork R.D.
Dave Mathis	Recreation Tech.	Clarks Fork R.D.
Phil Cowan	Resource Forester	Gardiner R.D.
Janet McBride	Recreation Forester	Gardiner R.D.
Dale Christensen	Recreation Tech.	Gardiner R.D.
Linda Ward-Williams	District Ranger	Beartooth R.D.
Ollie Jones	Recreation Forester	Beartooth R.D.
Laura Burns	Recreation Forester	Beartooth R.D.
George Schaller	Recreation Staff	Custer N.F.

Park Service

Steve Frye	District Ranger	North District, YNP
Tim Hudson	Maintenance Chief	Park Headquarters
Ken Carver	Road Maintenance	Beartooth Division

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Stankey, 1989 Clemson Short Course Presentation.

GLOSSARY

VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVES (VQO) - Goals that describe acceptable degrees of visual alteration allowed in the natural landscape.

> **Retention** - Provides for management activities that are not visually evident.
>
> **Partial Retention** - Provides for management activities that remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape.

VIEWSHED - The total area seen from a designated viewing location.

BARRIER-FREE - A development specification whereby a facility is accessible to the physically-challenged.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM (ROS) - Recreation resource delineations which identify recreation experience opportunities in six classes along a continuum from primitive to urban. Each class is defined in terms of natural resource settings, activities which occur within it, and the experience opportunities available. Two classes referred to in this paper are:

> **Semiprimitive Motorized** - The area is predominantly a natural environment with evidences of other users with primitive roads present and motorized use permitted. Visitors experience a moderate probability of isolation from the sights and sounds of humans, independence, and closeness to nature. Resource management activities may be present, but natural appearance is maintained.
>
> **Roaded Natural** - The area has a predominantly natural appearing environment with moderate evidence of sights and sounds of humans. Concentration of humans is moderate to low. A broad range of motorized and nonmotorized activities are available.

SEMIPRIMITIVE - This term refers to a character evoked by a sense of naturalness and a lack of human development or regulation. It is not the same as Semiprimitive Motorized, a classification term used in the ROS system.

APPENDIX A

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Each alternative contains unique management implications for the Forest Service. This appendix describes the effects of each alternative on Forest programs and District operations (Economic effects are discussed in the Economic Analysis).

Alternative A

The No Action alternative would maintain current management. Inadequate facilities would continue to deteriorate and maintenance needs would escalate. Frustration levels of managers would continue to climb as the need to provide high quality customer service is not met. National recognition for state-of-the-art recreation management programs would be non-existent. Failure of the Forest Service to provide high quality recreation management on the doorstep of Yellowstone National Park would be a critical strategic error in the national political arena.

Alternative B

Implementation of the Forest Plan alternative would emphasize District recreation programs. Funding would be required to construct and maintain new facilities, and additional personnel would be required to staff the visitor center and information sites. Development of an Interpretive Association would be warranted to manage the visitor center and produce information and interpretation materials. At least one additional seasonal crew would be employed to maintain interpretive waysides, trails, and information sites. Office staff would spend more time helping visitors with information.

Alternative C

The Proposed Action would also emphasize recreation programs. Effects would be similar to Alternative B, but an additional maintenance crew would not be required. Having dumpsters in campgrounds would release a crew to maintain interpretation and information sites. Development of Rock Creek Vista Point would impact the Beartooth District, as daily inspections and maintenance would be required. This would provide an excellent volunteer opportunity for a Corridor Host.

Improved coordination between Forests would result in more efficient management. Shared maintenance crews would be able to manage renovated campgrounds and new picnic grounds, so additional personnel would not be required. Savings would result from removal of the West Summit and Pilot-Index Overlook toilets and garbage cans. New signs would require maintenance approximately every five years. One additional seasonal employee would be required to patrol dispersed areas and provide information.

The lands workload on the Clarks Fork District would increase while the scenic easements were being processed. Beartooth District administration of the Race Camp would take little extra time, but the savings would be substantial to the Clarks Fork District. The annual coordination meeting would require preparation and one day to attend.

Alternative D

The Intensive Development alternative would have similar effects to Alternative C, but two more recreation crews would be required to patrol the Corridor and maintain the new developments. The Clay Butte Visitor Center would need another employee to handle increased visitation. Additional seasonal housing would be needed at the Crandall Work Center. Another wilderness ranger could be necessary to manage increased use in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and along the National Recreation Trail.

APPENDIX B

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE - PROPOSED ACTION

The implementation schedule lists organizational approvals and administrative actions required for project completion. Capital Investment Program funding strategy is explained, and a sign plan and monitoring requirements are discussed.

Organization

This paper should be presented to Forest supervisors of the Custer, Gallatin and Shoshone National Forests by December 15, 1990. A summary should be discussed with the superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, and representatives of the Montana Highway Department and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. Further input would be requested, and meetings would be scheduled to examine the Proposed Action and to establish preliminary design standards.

Input from this scoping and coordination would be used to complete a Biological Evaluation and an EA. By January 15, 1991, the EA and a Decision Notice would be presented to Custer, Gallatin, and Shoshone National Forest supervisors for approval. Approval of the Decision Notice would amend Forest Plans and allow individual Forests to proceed with implementation.

Implementation of management items could be accomplished without additional funding. Facility development is generally funded by non-constrained capital investment funds held at the Regional level. The Capital Investment Program (CIP) and Challenge Cost Share (CCS) partnerships would be used to acquire these funds.

Potential partners for CCS projects include:

American Cancer Society
Top of The World Store
Yellowstone National Park
Noranda Mining Company
Chambers of Commerce in Red Lodge and Cooke City
Park County Recreation Board
Montana State Highway Department
Northwest College
Nez Perce Tribe
Buffalo Bill Historical Center

Capital Investment Program

Implementation would be split into three CIP proposals. Each Forest would submit individual projects using the proposed EA to meet NEPA requirements. Proposals would follow preliminary design specifications. An entire proposal should be funded in the same year, so individual Forest packages should be submitted simultaneously to ensure uniform development. Figure 5 displays the ranked proposals, approximate cost, and recommended submittal dates.

The normal CIP implementation schedule is:

Year 1 - Design, planning, and submittal to RO
Year 2 - Funding for preconstruction/design
Year 3 - First construction year
Year 4 - Completion year for complex projects

Figure 5. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Priority	Project	Submittal Date
1	Interpretation and information services and day-use facilities **Total Cost $470,000**	2/91
2	Renovate campgrounds; develop Soda Butte Campground and trailheads. **Total Cost $328,000**	2/92
3	Develop visitor center at Red Lodge and information site at Cooke City **Total Cost $280,000**	2/93

Sign Plan

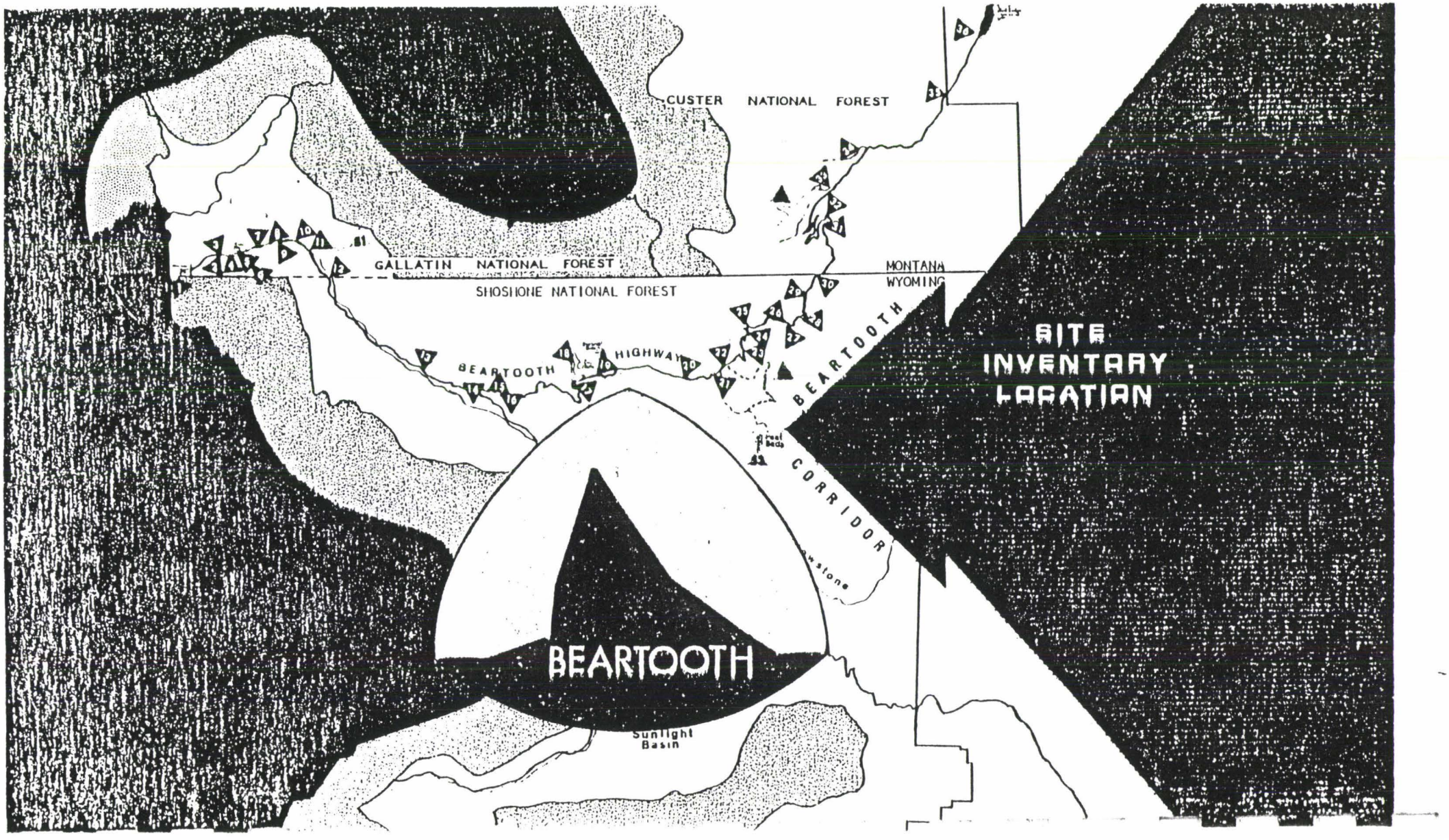
Corridor signing must be consistent. All recreation signs should be of solid wood construction with routed, reflectorized letters to maintain the semiprimitive setting and still provide easy viewing at night. Approach signs would be established for every campground, picnic ground, developed overlook, trailhead, and developed special interest site. As much as possible, administrative signs should be reduced, and travel management signs should be located away from the highway. Highway maintenance signs should be installed at the road closure gate in Rock Creek Canyon rather than the state line. Individual sign plans would be coordinated with Forest engineers.

Monitoring Plan

Annual customer satisfaction surveys should be done in campgrounds and at picnic areas and developed overlooks. Managers should monitor recreation use and the character of the recreation experience. It is important to know when Corridor capacity is reaching the limit of providing a semiprimitive setting. As long as the Forest Service is interested in providing high quality recreation services, monitoring will continue to play an important role in management decisions.

APPENDIX C

INTERPRETIVE PLAN SUMMARY - FOREST PLAN


CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST
GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST
SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
MONTANA
WYOMING
BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY
BEARTOOTH
CORRIDOR
BEARTOOTH
Sunlight Basin
SITE INVENTARY LOCATION

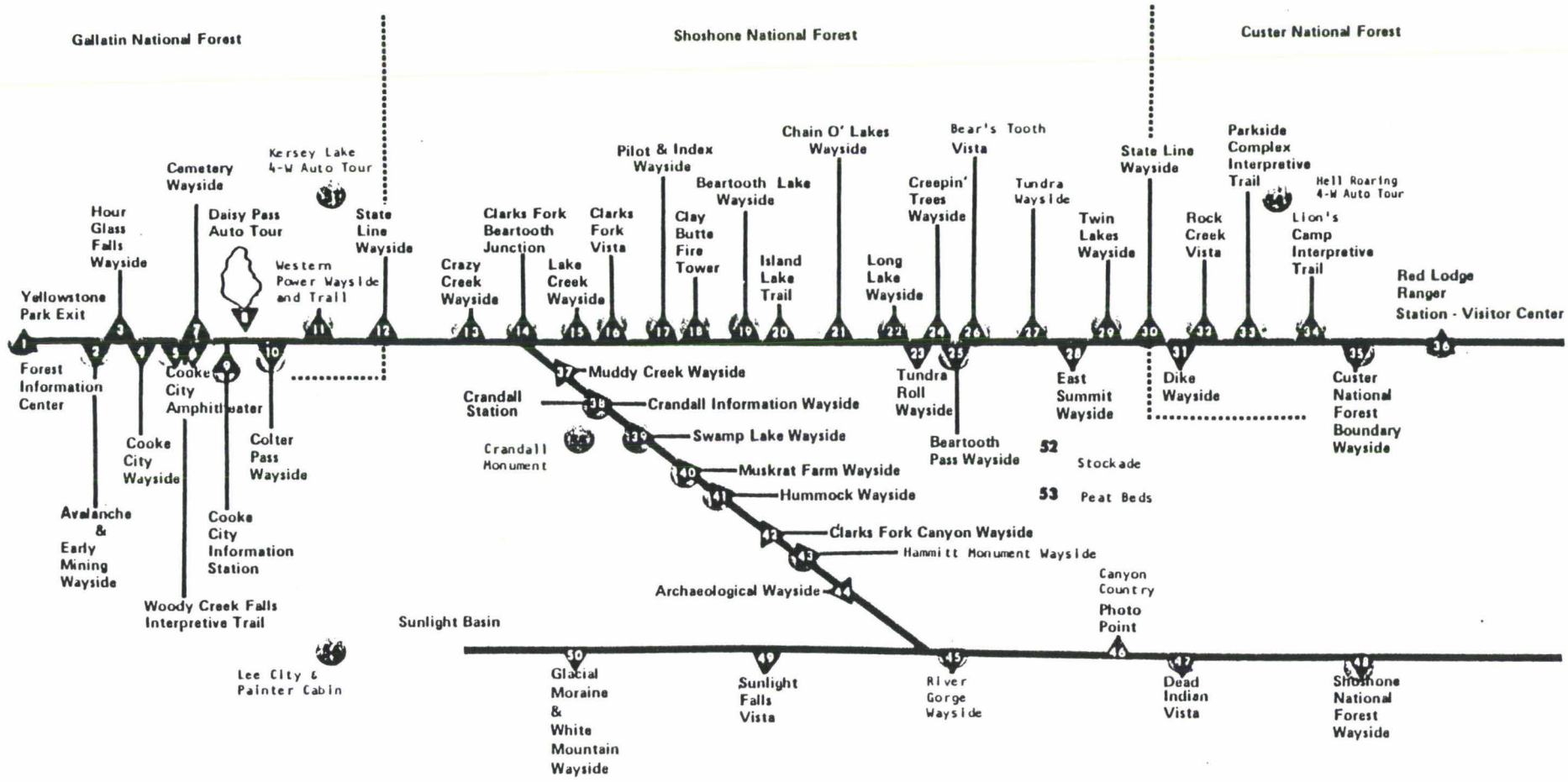
INTERPRETIVE PLAN	PROJECT
Site Inventory	Beartooth Corridor
Sites listed by Forest & number	Forests; Gallatin, Custer and Shoshone

INTERPRETIVE SITES

Forest	Site #	Name	Page
Gallatin National Forest	1	Northeast Exit of Yellowstone National Park - National Forest Information Station	37
	2	Hour Glass Falls Wayside and Interpretive Trail	52
	3	Avalanche and Welcome to Montana Wayside	68
	4	Cooke City Wayside	73
	5	Cooke City Amphitheater	81
	6	Woody Creek Hiking and Interpretive Trail	98
	7	Cooke City Cemetery	101
	8	Daisy Pass Auto Tour	106
	9	Cooke City - Forest Service Information Station	124
	10	Colter Pass Wayside	125
	11	Western Power Wayside and Russell Creek Trailhead	132
	12	State Line Wayside - Montana and Wyoming	150
Shoshone National Forest	13	Crazy Creek Wayside	155
	14	Clarks Fork - Beartooth Junction	168
	15	Lake Creek Falls Wayside	177
	16	Clarks Fork Vista	190
	17	Pilot and Index Wayside	205
	18	Clay Butte Fire Tower	219
	19	Beartooth Lake Wayside	228
	20	Island Lake	242
	21	Chain O' Lakes Wayside	254
	22	Long Lake Wayside	264
	23	Creepin' Trees Wayside	271
	24	Tundra Roll Wayside	278
	25	Beartooth Pass Vista	284
	26	Bear's Tooth Vista	308
	27	Tundra Wayside	315
	28	East Summit Wayside	347
	29	Twin Lakes Wayside	360
	30	State Line Wayside	374
Custer National Forest	31	Dike Wayside	379
	32	Rock Creek Vista	386
	33	Parkside Recreation Complex	425
	34	Lion's Interpretive Trail	447
	35	Custer National Forest Boundary	461
	36	Red Lodge Ranger Station Visitor Information Center	464

PRIORITY CHART FOR SITE DEVELOPMENT

INTERPRETIVE SITES: Name, number and relative location


Gallatin National Forest
Shoshone National Forest
Custer National Forest
1 Yellowstone Park Exit
2 Forest Information Center
3 Hour Glass Falls Wayside
4 Cooke City Wayside
5 Avalanche & Early Mining Wayside
6 Woody Creek Falls Interpretive Trail
7 Cemetery Wayside
8 Cooke City Amphitheater
9 Cooke City Information Station
10 Colter Pass Wayside
11 Daisy Pass Auto Tour
12 Western Power Wayside and Trail
13 Kersey Lake 4-W Auto Tour
14 State Line Wayside
15 Crazy Creek Wayside
16 Clarks Fork Beartooth Junction
17 Lake Creek Wayside
18 Clarks Fork Vista
19 Pilot & Index Wayside
20 Clay Butte Fire Tower
21 Beartooth Lake Wayside
22 Island Lake Trail
23 Chain O' Lakes Wayside
24 Long Lake Wayside
25 Creepin' Trees Wayside
26 Bear's Tooth Vista
27 Beartooth Pass Wayside
28 Tundra Wayside
29 Tundra Roll Wayside
30 Twin Lakes Wayside
31 East Summit Wayside
32 State Line Wayside
33 Dike Wayside
34 Rock Creek Vista
35 Parkside Complex Interpretive Trail
36 Hell Roaring 4-W Auto Tour
37 Lion's Camp Interpretive Trail
38 Custer National Forest Boundary Wayside
39 Red Lodge Ranger Station - Visitor Center
40 Muddy Creek Wayside
41 Crandall Station
42 Crandall Information Wayside
43 Crandall Monument
44 Swamp Lake Wayside
45 Muskrat Farm Wayside
46 Hummock Wayside
47 Clarks Fork Canyon Wayside
48 Hammitt Monument Wayside
49 Archaeological Wayside
50 Canyon Country Photo Point
51 Lee City & Painter Cabin
52 Stockade
53 Peat Beds
Sunlight Basin
50 Glacial Moraine & White Mountain Wayside
49 Sunlight Falls Vista
45 River Gorge Wayside
46 Dead Indian Vista
48 Shoshone National Forest Wayside

1st Priority 2nd Priority 3rd Priority Hold or No Development

INTERPRETIVE SITE DEVELOPMENT COSTS
(The cost reflects 1977 cost estimates)

	SITE	WHAT'S THERE	DEVELOPMENT	COST ESTIMATE
1.	Yellowstone National Park Exit	Developed kiosk and traffic lanes	A manned facility Traffic control Information and orientation signs Beartooth brochure	$12,775.00
2.	Hour Glass Falls Wayside and Interpretive Trail	New	Total development Paved parking, trail system, sanitation, and interpretive/ orientation signs	$30,035.00 (does not include parking)
3.	Avalanche/Welcome	Pullout provided for 3 cars - ex- and to facilitate 5 cars	Expand parking area, pave parking, install interpretive signs and separate from parking with barrier system. Radio information system	$ 4,608.00 Mall construction of Info-system (does not include parking)
4.	Cooke City Wayside at city limits	Pullout Develop this site if interpretive sign cannot be placed within city	Pave parking, install interpretive signs and separate with barrier system.	$ 6,904.00 - Includes parking
5.	Cooke City Amphitheater	Existing	Up-grade site and trail system, construct gate-way to amphitheater.	$16,230.00 Includes naturalists salary and moviemobile
6.	Woody Creek Falls and Trail	Trail Exists	Up-grade trail to safety standards, install interpretive signs.	$ 4,650.00
7.	Cooke City Cemetery	Adequate parking area. Site about 100' off highway.	Installation of interpretive sign, construct post and pole fence around cemetery, install grave marker if Cooke community will not.	$ 2,600.00 without site development
8.	Daisy Pass Tour	Road and parking areas	Install interpretive and information signs, develop and print auto tour brochure.	$ 8,474.00
9.	Cooke City Information Station	Access road, building and parking.	None	None
10.	Colter Pass Wayside	Site exists with interpretive media	A complete new wayside is planned because of future road development, with paved parking, sanitation facility, water, and interpretive signing.	$ 4,611.00 Does not include parking or moving of water system.

	SITE	WHAT'S THERE	DEVELOPMENT	COST ESTIMATE
11.	Western Power Wayside and Trail	Site is old and poorly developed	Construct new access road, pave parking and internal trail system. Construct kiosk and install interpretive signs.	$53,204.00
12.	State Line Wayside	Existing site with signs and parking.	Propose change of state signs to harmonize with the Beartooth theme. Add photo point for photo record of "you were here."	$ 1,550.00
13.	Crazy Creek Wayside	Paved parking and trail to falls.	Upgrade trail to falls, construct new trail head and unloading area for horse traffic. Install interpretive and information signs and separate with barrier system. Construct viewing platform at falls.	$11,289.00
14.	Clarks Fork-Beartooth Junction	New intersection - parking is not provided.	Advocate a minimum of signing.	None
15.	Lake Creek Wayside	Parking is provided with new construction, it is to be paved.	Construct foot trail from parking to old bridge, steps are needed under new bridge. Construct trail and viewing platform at old CCC bridge. Install interpretive signs.	$10,840.00
16.	Clarks Fork Vista	Parking area with guardrail and 2UV toilet.	Pave parking and access road. Construct interpretive mall and its signing.	$25,065.00
17.	Pilot and Index Wayside	Access road and parking and a 2UV toilet.	Pave access road, parking and mall areas, install interpretive signs and separate from parking with barrier system. Relocate 2UV. Landscape complete wayside area, including access road.	$33,651.00
18.	Clay Butte Fire Tower	Access road and parking at tower, a 1UV toilet, and interpretive room at tower.	A manned facility. Upgrade access road to tower, upgrade interpretive exhibits.	$15,000.00
19.	Beartooth Lake Wayside	Graveled pullout which is not adequate for a parking facility with the proposed development.	Develop exhisting pullout into an interpretive mall with interpretive signs and separate from parking with a barrier system. Construct a paved parking area across highway for the interpretive mall and fishermen. Install a 2UV toilet or direct use to Beartooth Campground, 1/4 mile distant. Do not develop a trail to Beartooth Falls, leave an explorative area.	$38.066.00

	SITE	WHAT'S THERE	DEVELOPMENT	COST ESTIMATE
20.	Island Lake	Adequate	No development except at trail head with information signs. Moviemobile will be used at this campground.	$ 2,100.00
21.	Chain O' Lakes Wayside	Graveled pullout	Fill and subsurface 100' of parking area. Pave parking area and separate interpretive signs from parking with barrier system.	$20,471.00
22.	Long Lake Wayside	Ungraveled parking area	Dirt fill needed to bring parking area to grade - subsurface and pave. Separate interpretive signs with barriers from parking area.	$13,338.00
23.	Creepin' Tree Wayside	Graveled pullout	Pave pullout Install interpretive signs and separate from parking with barrier system.	$ 6,975.00
24.	Tundra Roll Wayside	Graveled pullout	Pave pullout, install interpretive signs and separate from parking area with barrier system.	$ 5,084.00
25.	Beartooth Pass Wayside (West Summit)	Wayside, access road, and parking area, 2UV toilet.	Pave access road and parking area, upgrade trail to vista. Keep 2UV but improvements are needed. Construct vista, install interpretive signs and Pass sign.	$34,357.00
26.	Bear's Tooth Vista	Area available for parking.	Fill material needed to bring parking area to grade - pave parking. Install interpretive signs and separate from parking with a barrier system.	$ 9,457.00
27.	Tundra Wayside	This development may shift to site 25.	Construct a complete wayside, pave parking, and access road, interpretive trail with signs and possibly a sanitary facility.	$41,412.00
28.	East Summit Wayside	Space is available for parking.	Site is now used by ski school until August, however, site is programed for interpretive development and interpretation on site after ski school closes for year. Pave parking and construct short trail to interpretive signs. Protect signs with a barrier system.	$10,795.00
29.	Twin Lakes Wayside	Parking is available for 4 or 5 cars.	Pave parking area. Construct viewing platform outside of guardrail. Interpretive signs will be positioned around the platform.	$ 6,355.00

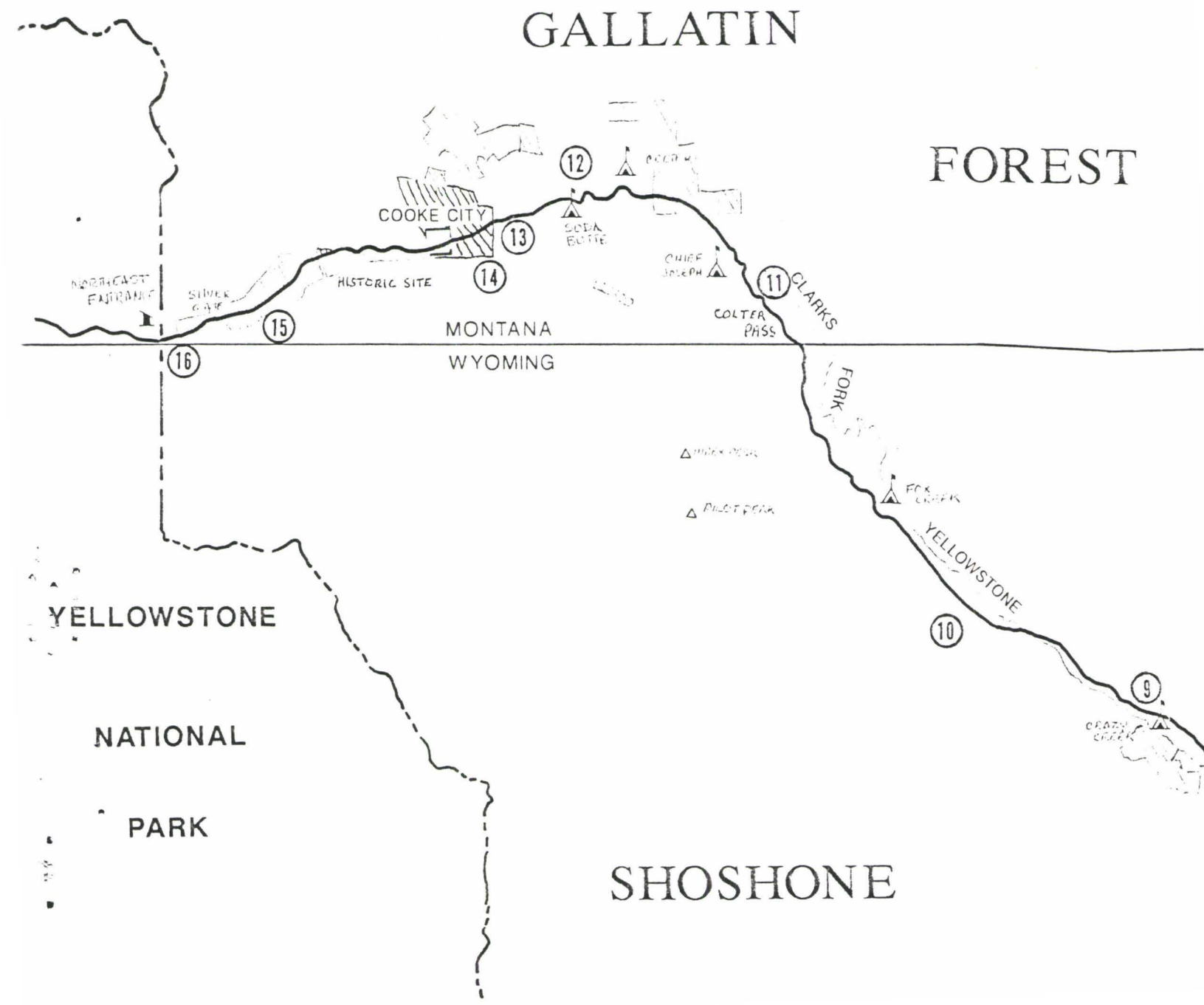
	SITE	WHAT'S THERE	DEVELOPMENT	COST ESTIMATE
30.	State Line Wayside	State line signs and parking area	Pave parking area. Propose change of state line signs to harmonize with Beartooth theme, add photo point for photo record "you were here."	$ 1,300.00
31.	Dike Wayside Lower site	Paved pullout	Construct mall and install interpretive signs.	$ 2,314.00
32.	Rock Creek Vista	Developed wayside	Modify interpretive stories, add trail interpretive labels. Remove corncrib and relocate site identification sign. Rock wall outside of trail may need constructing.	$12,302.00 +39,000.00 $51,302.00
33.	Parkside Camping Complex	New interpretive development	Construct interpretive trail system that can be utilized by visitors to all three campgrounds. Development consists of paved foot trail and installation of interpretive signs.	$23,700.00
34.	Lion's Camp Interpretive Trail	New interpretive development	Construct interpretive trail system for the handicapped. Pave trail, install benches and interpretive signs.	$18,315.00
35.	Custer National Forest Boundary	Large paved parking area with a 2UV toilet	Reserve this site for a future unmanned Forest information center.	$1,200.00
36.	Red Lodge Ranger Station	Ranger Station with a small reception area	Provide adequate parking for visitors to the station. Construct an addition to the station to house a small visitor/reception area, addition to be large enough to house a minimum of interpretive elements and large enough to properly handle the information-seeking visitors.	$37,200.00

APPENDIX D

SITE MAP

BEA

Map #	Potential Sites For Development
1	Lion's Camp
2	Dike
3	East Summit
4	Tundra
5	Bear's Tooth
6	Creeping Trees
7	Tundra Roll
8	Lake Creek Falls
9	Crazy Creek Falls
10	Clarks Fork River
11	Western Power
12	Daisy Pass
13	Cooke City Cemetery
14	Woody Creek
15	Avalanche
16	Hour Glass Falls



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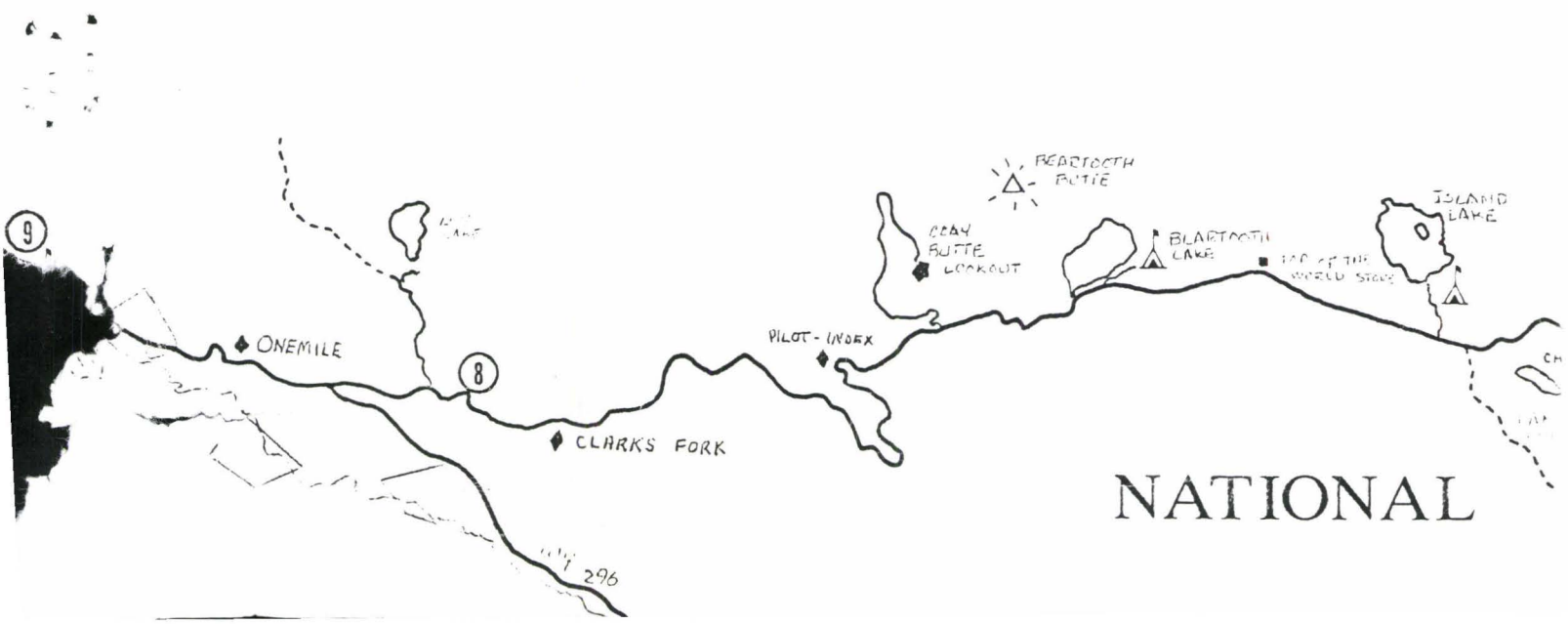

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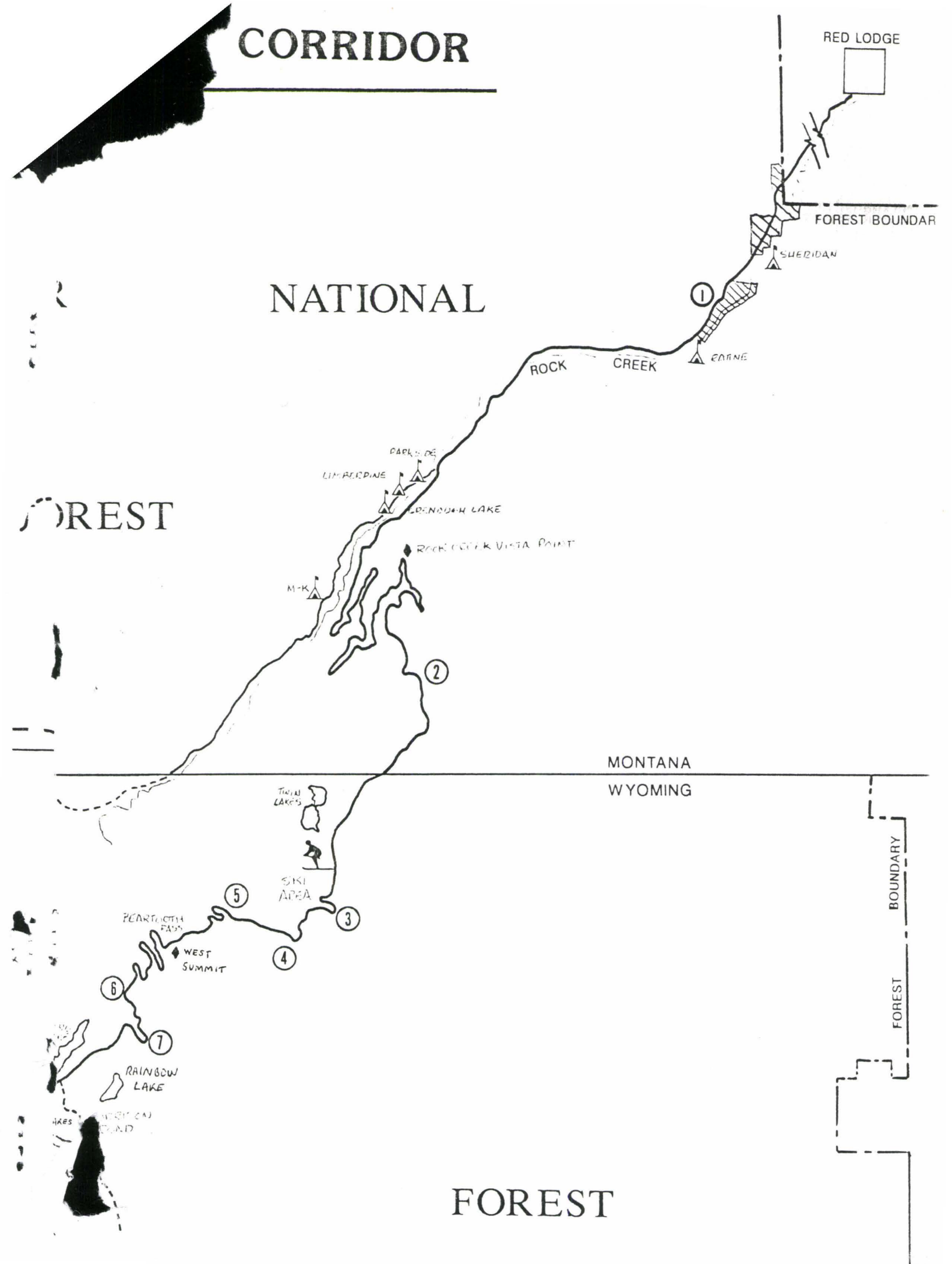
CORRIDOR
RED LODGE
FOREST BOUNDAR
SHERIDAN
NATIONAL
ROCK CREEK
EATNE
LIMBERDINE
LAKE
ROCK CREEK VISTA POINT
M-K
FOREST
MONTANA
WYOMING
TWIN LAKES
SKI AREA
PEARTOOTH PASS
WEST SUMMIT
RAINBOW LAKE
BOUNDARY
FOREST
FOREST
1
2
3
4
5
6
7